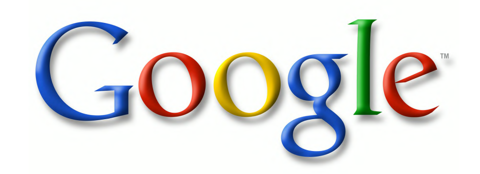



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FANTASTIC STORIES.

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BY

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THE

ADVENTURES OF PRINCE LULU.

PRINCE LULU was the only son of King Gratanfulish, a mighty monarch in his own estimation, but whose noble deeds ungrateful history has forgotten to record. The negligence or ignorance of geographers has likewise left us unacquainted with the site of his kingdom—Big-but-poor. The last syllable, however, of its name seems to show that it was somewhere in the south of Asia. The son of this great king was brought up in a manner befitting his station. A renowned preceptor—Fatanlazee—who had at an early age acquired the highest distinctions of learning, and had ever since spent about four-fifths of his time in eating, drinking, and sleeping, was appointed his chief instructor. Withal, Prince Lulu was melancholy and discontented.

'I am sick of this life,' he said to his tutor; 'I would see the rest of the world. You have often told me that you are the greatest logician

in the world, you shall therefore persuade my father to let me travel.'

Fatanlazee grew pale on hearing these words.

'Your royal father,' said he, 'is more in the habit of chopping off heads than chopping logic when he finds any one who ventures to differ from his own royal opinion.'

Prince Lulu frowned.

'My father may behead you,' said he, 'if you do what I tell you to do, but I certainly will if you don't.'

Fatanlazee, after revolving for some time in his mind these alternatives, at last came to the conclusion that it was better to incur simply the risk than the certainty of being put to death. He therefore, accompanied by the prince, went to the king and made known to him his son's desire.

The monarch was astounded and angry when he heard of the indiscreet wish of Lulu.

'What could have put so ignoble a desire into your heart?' he said to him. 'And how could you proceed in life unguided by the advice which I daily take the trouble to pour into your ear?'

The remembrance of this advice was too much for the prince, who incontinently yawned. Never had this indecorous act been committed in the royal presence before, save once, when a courtier interrupted the king in an oration he was making

on his own clemency by a most undeniable yawn. The king had then finished his speech on clemency, and stopped the courtier's propensity for yawning by having him instantly decapitated. He was, however, loth to inflict this punishment on his son, though by no means inclined to be so forbearing towards his son's preceptor. Fatanlazee now saw himself in danger of undergoing the fate he had anticipated, when the prince, taking pity on him, calmed his father's wrath by retracting his request for permission to travel, and by asseverating that what had been mistaken for a yawn was only a gape of wonder caused by recollection of his father's wisdom.

But, although the prince had openly renounced his design, he still resolved to effect it secretly. He had a young attendant, named Ahmed, to whom he was much attached, and to him he communicated his scheme of flight, proposing that Ahmed should accompany him.

'My prince,' said Ahmed, 'I can well understand that you, who have never seen the world, and do not know how detestable it is, should wish to make this expedition, but I who have experienced the storms of life am by no means anxious to leave the only quiet haven I have found.'

'That may be, Ahmed,' replied the prince. 'The question, however, is not whether you shall leave it or no, but whether you shall be

ignominiously expelled for ever from it, or leave it now and return to it hereafter. If you refuse to accompany me, I will have you disgraced; but if you go with me you shall, if it ever lies in my power, be rewarded for your devotion to me.'

The prince persuaded Ahmed as easily as he had persuaded Fatanlazee. They both disguised themselves, and, having concealed about their persons as many valuables as they could conveniently carry, they stole out of the palace. They travelled about from country to country for some time until the prince, who was tired of being only an observer, expressed a wish to become an actor in life.

'What occupation,' said he to Ahmed, 'is most beneficial to mankind?'

'Least injurious, I suppose you mean?' replied Ahmed, who was by no means in a philanthropic mood, or inclined to give other men credit for feelings which he did not himself possess. 'The chief object of man seems to be to do as much good to himself and as much harm to others as he can. Priests threaten others with horrible evils which they don't apprehend for themselves, and, whilst they don't permit themselves to fight, excite the worst quarrels known in the world. Lawyers ruin all that come into their clutches, and enrich themselves. Doctors physic all they can except themselves, and convey

people very expeditiously out of the world, though they themselves are rather long-lived. Merchants, to benefit themselves, cheat their neighbours. Soldiers murder—but, as they also run the risk of being murdered, perhaps theirs is the honestest vocation of all, except that of husbandmen, who do good and no harm.'

'We will then become soldiers,' rejoined Lulu; 'and when we are tired of that occupation we will till the ground.'

'A good choice,' said Ahmed. 'We can ride and use the sword, so we are tolerably fitted to be soldiers; and as for husbandry, it seems to me a very simple employment, and to consist chiefly in putting seed into the ground, and waiting till it comes up again.'

They accordingly purchased horses and arms, and enlisted themselves under a commander who had contracted with the king of the country to raise a body of men for his service, in consideration of being allowed to collect and appropriate to his own use a certain portion of the public revenue. As, however, this commander used his soldiers more in his own service than the king's, and chiefly employed them in enforcing the payment of the taxes due to him, the prince speedily became disgusted with military service.

'Let us desert!' he said to Ahmed.

'We shall be shot,' said Ahmed, 'if we are not successful.'

'What does it matter if we are?' yawned the prince.

His follower seemed to have formed a different opinion as to the importance of such an event. He however consented to join in the act, and the desertion was effected in safety. They now determined to become agriculturists. They sold their horses and arms, rented land, purchased implements, put corn into the ground, and sat down to wait for its reappearance. They had passed a very short time in this last occupation when an event happened that diverted their attention, and put a stop to the prince's career as an agriculturist. The princess Lolah, daughter of the king of the country in which they then were, passed, unveiled in her litter along the road. Their tenement bordered upon the road, so that they had an opportunity of beholding this charming princess. As soon as the prince saw her he discovered that he could not live without her, and began to consult with Ahmed as to the way by which he might obtain this necessity of his existence. Ahmed advised him to sue in the form of a prince, and not in that of a pauper; but the prince determined to attempt gaining her affections under his assumed character. As he had acquired so much experience in agriculture,

he naturally thought of obtaining access to the princess by procuring the situation of under gardener. There happened to be a vacancy amongst the under gardeners, and, as every office from that of the prime minister downwards was to be bought, Prince Lulu had no difficulty in obtaining the situation. He soon also found an opportunity of commencing his suit. The princess was in the habit of walking in the garden, and passed by prince Lulu as he was employed in some of the duties of his new occupation. He determined to profit by the occasion, and shot at her one of those amorous glances which he had found very efficacious when he had directed them against the ladies of his father's court; but the mode of courtship employed by a prince towards dependants may not be equally successful when made use of by a dependant towards a princess.

'Insolent slave,' she said, 'how dare you look at me? But I will cure you of your impertinence.'

Then, clapping her hands, she bade an eunuch, who appeared, to cut off the head of the prince. Lulu, astounded at this unexpected recoil of his shot, stammered out:

'Beware what you do—I am the son of the King of Big-but-poor.'

The princess no sooner heard this but she burst

out into a fit of laughter. When she had recovered she said to the prince:

'Slave, you have amused me by your audacious lie. I will therefore change your punishment: you shall either receive fifty strokes with the bastinado, or a hundred with a slipper. Choose which you will.'

The prince made election of what he considered the lighter punishment, namely, that of the bastinado. But he was grievously mistaken, and when he had received thirty strokes on the soles of the feet he cried out, and prayed that the punishment might be commuted for that of the slipper. He accordingly received a hundred blows with the slipper, and was turned out of the garden.

'I would risk my life to obtain her,' he groaned, as he crawled away, 'but I will not incur the chance of being bastinadoed.'

He returned to Ahmed, whom he found moodily overlooking his field.

'I have been bastinadoed,' exclaimed the prince.

'I cannot see any sign of my corn,' said Ahmed.

'Let us go back to Big-but-poor,' said Lulu.

And they went back accordingly.

Their return was opportune. They found that the king had been dead for about three months;

that the people had, in that time, tried and become disgusted with three different forms of government, and were at a loss to discover another variety. In this dilemma they readily received Prince Lulu as heir to the old king.

Lulu was no sooner safely enthroned than he sent Ahmed to the father of the princess Lolah to demand for him the hand of his daughter. That monarch was much perplexed by the proposal, and not being himself able to decide, took the unusual course of consulting the wishes of his daughter. She, however, relieved him from all embarrassment by promptly declining the honour. Lulu, nothing daunted, levied a large army and invaded the kingdom of Lolah's father. He defeated his opponent's army, besieged his capital, and demanded his daughter in marriage a second time.

'King,' said the father of Lolah, 'you have, since you first demanded my daughter, shown your devotion to her by the most heroic deeds. You have ravaged my kingdom, and with the loss of five thousand of your subjects have slain ten thousand of mine. I can no longer refuse.'

Whether the old King was moved by the heroism of Lulu, or the necessity of his situation, is a question into which the writer will not enter. Suffice it to say that he yielded with a very good grace, but his daughter with a very bad one. She returned with King Lulu to Big-but-poor

with the determination, however, to avoid marriage with him if possible. Ahmed, who was a handsome young fellow and had been raised to great honours by his master, was admitted freely to her society; and she quickly established a flirtation with him.

'Ahmed,' she said to him, 'I do not love your master, but I do love you. Let us fly together.'

'Queen of my desires,' said Ahmed, 'if King Lulu should recapture us, he would assuredly put me to death.'

'You are wonderfully prudent,' said Lolah, with scorn, 'but a woman's wrath is more to be feared than a man's, and if you do not accede to my wish I will find means to have you impaled.'

'Delight of my eyes,' replied Ahmed, 'I prefer eloping with you.'

Next morning Lulu could see neither Ahmed nor Lolah, but he received two letters which fully explained the cause of their absence.

One was from Ahmed, and was as follows:

King Lulu,—I had thought to repay your favours to me with gratitude and devotion; but my fate has determined otherwise.

The other was from Lolah:

You thought to marry me, though it was evident that I had no inclination for you; but I have balked

you, and revenged myself the more on you by fleeing with your servant.

This was the first stroke of real adversity that the King had received, and it did him good, as it does most men. He had lost his friend and his mistress at one fell swoop, and, resolving with pride and manliness to overcome his mortification, he applied himself with ardour to state affairs, and found in continued occupation a happiness he had never before felt.

A PAGE FROM THE HISTORY OF KLEINUNDENGREICH.

THE Prince of Kleinundengreich was holding a council, the importance of whose deliberations was marked by the fact that his Serene Highness had already smoked six pipes, and yet the council had not broken up. The prince commenced his seventh pipe, and the Count Fuchsenhaupt, who united in his own person the various offices of Prime Minister, Lord Treasurer, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and President of the Council, continued his statement of the financial difficulties of the Government.

'The road which intersects your Highness's dominions is so out of repair as to prevent all ingress and egress. Consequently trade is almost at a standstill. The army is in a state bordering upon mutiny, partly in consequence of their not having received their pay, partly in consequence of the damaged state of their pantaloons, which

they allege makes them both uncomfortable and ridiculous. The Exchequer is dry.'

So, seemingly, was the speaker; for, as he concluded, he took a long pull at the beer with which the council habitually moistened their deliberations.

'Hundert Teufel!' exclaimed the prince, who, always preserving a proper sense of his own dignity, never deigned to invoke less than a hundred fiends.

Baron Hartkopf, throwing back his head in despair, brought it in violent contact with the wall behind him, and turned round anxiously to discover whether he had increased the expenses of Government by seriously injuring the walls of the council chamber. As the bringing of flint and steel into contact with each other will elicit a spark from the former, so did an idea seem to be struck from the head of the Baron by its collision with the plaister. The idea is worthy of notice, as the only one that had ever been known to come from the Baron.

'Repair the road and the pantaloons,' he said.

'The suggestion of the noble Baron,' replied Count Fuchsenhaupt, 'would have been well worthy of consideration, had not such a proceeding as he proposes been impracticable. We have not the money, and, therefore, not the means of

mending the road; and the pantaloons are too far gone to admit of any repair.'

As no other suggestion was hazarded, the council moodily broke up.

'What can have become of the Baron Storgammer?' said Count Fuchsenhaupt. 'The Lord Chamberlain is generally a regular attendant at council.'

Baron Hartkopf, to whom this remark was addressed, scratched his head, which, however, was not capable of giving birth to another suggestion.

At this moment the Lord Chamberlain appeared.

'An accident,' he said, addressing the prince, 'has prevented me from attending to-day the council of your Serene Highness. I had heard that the audacious plebeian, Max Bauerman, who was banished by your Serene Highness for the treasonable act of kissing your daughter, the Princess Amalia, within the very precincts of your princely residence, was in the habit of daily traversing your principality. As I was riding this morning, I beheld him at no great distance from this place—'

'Tausend Teufel!' ejaculated the prince.

'I attempted to arrest the shameless intruder, but, as he avoided my grasp, I fell from my horse, and broke my—'

'What?' interrupted Dr. Blasenpflaster, the court physician, proceeding rapidly and skilfully to make an examination of the injured nobleman.

'Pipe,' groaned the Baron.

The prince—his equanimity much disturbed by the financial statement of Count Fuchsenhaupt, and the news of the Baron Storgammer, attempted to restore himself by a walk on the terrace in front of his palace. His daughter was also on the terrace, and it seemed to him that as he appeared the form of a man suddenly vanished from the side of his daughter. Not being able to account for this phenomenon, he retired to consult Dr. Blasenpflaster as to whether he might not have been subject to a spectral illusion. No sooner had he departed than the same form (that of Max Bauerman) reappeared on the terrace.

'Go away, Max!' cried the princess, 'my father will be here again immediately.'

'I will go, if you will only consent to fly with me.'

'It will be so very wrong, and I ought not to leave my father.'

'Your father can do without you. I cannot. Therefore, in common charity, you ought to come with me.'

The princess at once felt herself very charitably inclined.

'We will fly together,' continued Max, 'to the end of the world—to Hong-Kong—or, as that place has got rather a bad character, we will say to Canada, a country where the earth gives spontaneously everything that man can desire. There raspberry bushes grow so thickly that the difficulty is to prevent them from growing. There sugar can be extracted from trees. I will cut down a tree a-day—so we shall have plenty of fire-wood. At the end of the year I shall have cleared a large tract of ground. We shall be as happy as possible—'

'Living on love and raspberry jam,' added the lady, somewhat discontented at the prospect.

'Why not?'

'Hundert tausend Teufel!'

It is not to be supposed that this emphatic exclamation proceeded from the lips of the fair Amalia.

The prince had not gone far before he repented of his dangerous plan of putting himself into the hands of Dr. Blasenpflaster, and determined to make another effort to discover whether the figure he had seen was substantial or not. He half suspected that it was Max, and, in the hope of surprising him, had taken off his boots, and softly approached the lovers. It was his angry ejaculation that had so rudely disturbed them. The first impulse of the prince was to eject Max from the terrace by a kick so bestowed as to inflict the

utmost ignominy on its recipient; but remembering that, as he then was, his kick would be as bootless as his leg, he hastily retired in order that he might put on his boots, and thus prepare himself the better for the assault. Max did not wait for his return, but, after repeating the treasonable act for which he had been banished, jumped from the terrace, and set off with a speed which promised to bear him out of Kleinundengreich in less than a quarter of an hour. The prince, on his return, perceiving that Max had escaped, was resolved that his daughter should not do likewise. He therefore imprisoned her in a wing of the palace, under the guardianship of the Fraülein von Steifschnuren, who, from the fact that nobody had ever dreamt, or was likely to dream, of running away with *her*, might well be supposed one of the last persons in the world to do anything in the world to promote the elopement of two lovers.

That evening, the princess was sitting in a melancholy mood over the fire in a chamber of her prison, and the Fraülein was in the enjoyment of a deep slumber (as was her wont) after a hearty supper, when the princess heard the following pathetic ditty sung from beneath her window:

Love's opportunity is ripe,
  And I to catch it now am here;
The 'Herr Papa' he smokes his pipe,
  Your guards are fuddled all with beer.

I nothing want but your consent,
And we'll be off this very night;
Since last we met, the hours I've spent
In making ready for our flight.

I cannot enter at the door,
But I can to the window climb;
I hear your fat old guardian snore,
So let us, dearest, lose no time.

This was sung in a low tone, but the self-satisfied singer could not help giving vent to a flourish at the end of it, which had the effect of awakening the Fraülein.

'What horrible screeching is that?' she ejaculated.

'Screeching!' replied the princess, indignantly. 'You have no ear for music, Fraülein.'

'If you call that music,' rejoined the other, 'I know who is the musician. It is Max Bauerman.'

'And if it is,' said the princess, 'will you not leave the room, and let me speak a few words to him in private? You know that he is on the ground, and I am up here.'

'I will do nothing of the kind,' answered the Fraülein, with firmness.

'Very well!' said the princess, calmly, at the same time putting the poker into the fire.

'What are you going to do now?' exclaimed the Fraülein.

'The means of death are never denied to the

wretched,' the princess solemnly replied. 'This poker, when red-hot, will terminate my miserable existence.'

The Fraülein was horrified, knowing that the princess was a determined young lady, and believing her capable of any rash act.

'There is a fire in the next room, and a comfortable arm-chair,' said the princess.

'Well, I will go there for five minutes.'

Now the princess well knew that the Fraülein would take in that arm-chair the rest of her interrupted nap. The Fraülein slept, and a ladder was softly raised to the window by Max. A modern heroine might find some difficulty in eloping from anything less than a bay window; but the princess wore no crinoline, and succeeded in making her escape.

The Fraülein awoke some time after, and found that her charge had disappeared. Aware that she had been guilty of gross neglect of duty, she set about framing some story which might exculpate her. But not being remarkable for ingenuity, she invented the somewhat improbable fiction that Max Bauerman, mounted on a fiery dragon, had flown through the window, had cast her into a deep slumber by waving a wand which he held in his hand, and that when she awoke she found the princess had gone. Her explanation was received most contemptuously

by the prince, who told her plainly that she, the decorous Fraülein, had been drinking. But as he did not consider intoxication an excuse, and as she was the only object left on which he could well vent his wrath, he lighted his pipe and began to devise brave punishments for the unfortunate dame. His meditations were, however, disagreeably interrupted by the intelligence that his subjects had revolted, and that a mob, which his army had joined, and which exhibited as a standard a pair of tattered military pantaloons, was besieging his palace.

The prince and his few adherents hastily prepared for defence. Observing the eye of a rebel reconnoitering the palace through the key-hole of the door, the prince launched from his pipe, which he had not yet relinquished, a volume of tobacco smoke at the spy, which much discomfited him. This temporary success, however, was of little avail. The door was burst open, and one of the most athletic of the rebels actually succeeded in breaking Baron Hartkopf's very thick head. The prince and his party were so panic-stricken by this astounding feat, that they immediately fled. The prince escaped from his dominions, and finally found his way to Canada, to Mr. and Mrs. Bauerman, with whom he is now spending the remainder of his days in tranquillity.

THE MARVELLOUS HISTORY OF POOPOO.

SITUATED somewhere in one of those vast oceans that extend almost from the North to the South pole, and are now called by the names of Atlantic and Pacific, was a group of charming islands which cannot be recognised in these days. It was, however, in ancient times known by the name of Beleel, which, being translated into our language, signifies 'Pretty Islands.'

At the time of our story king Ptchaw-ptchaw ruled over this domain. He was a man of few words — so few, indeed, that if we were to say that he spoke two dozen in the course of his life we should probably over-estimate the number. He would sit in the council-chamber all day, smoking opium and transacting the chief business of the state, which was simple and did not require speech. His prime minister would read over to him such acts as required confirmation and he would either nod or shake his head in token of

approval or the reverse. But the business in which he most delighted was that of sentencing criminals. Whenever he had this to do, he would either stroke his throat or put his right fore-finger into the palm of his left hand, meaning by the former sign that the culprit was to be beheaded, by the latter that he was to be bastinadoed. But this system of signs had on one occasion nearly proved fatal to him. It had been found necessary to get a new executioner. One was selected who, from his great physical strength, seemed to be well fitted for the office. He happened, however, to be as weak in head as he was strong in body. He had been brought to comprehend that, when the king put his finger to his throat, it was the sign for him to execute his office; but when the sign was given, he conceived the idea that the king wanted his own head to be cut off, and was with difficulty prevented from acting in accordance with this notion. King Ptchaw-ptchaw became so passionately fond of sentencing criminals that, when there were no more left, he would have all his slaves up and order them one by one to be punished. But as it would have been too expensive an amusement to put them to death, he generally contented himself with ordering the lesser punishment to be inflicted. He never liked to be disturbed when he was engaged in his favourite

occupation, and when it once happened that he was so interrupted by an attendant, who acquainted him with the fact that one of his wives had just died, he grumbled peevishly and gave the sign for the bastinado, whereupon the bearer of the tidings was chastised. After this, though several of his wives died, no one ventured to tell him of their fate, which he remained ignorant of as long as he lived.

This amiable monarch had one son, prince Poopoo, in every respect the opposite of his father. He was well-favoured, adventurous, and much given to speaking. After having thoroughly explored his native isles, he determined, if possible, to see something of the rest of the world, and, for the furtherance of this object, addressed his father in the following words:

'My father, I think it desirable that I should see some country besides Beleel, and therefore, with your permission, I will travel.'

When Ptchaw-ptchaw comprehended these words, which he managed to do in five minutes, he stared at his son with amazement and choler. At first he stroked his throat; but remembering that if his son were beheaded, he had no other to replace him, he made a negative sign with his head, and then put his forefinger into the palm of his hand. Thinking, however, that this was too humiliating a punishment for one of his own

blood, he again shook his head, and much to the surprise of the courtiers, especially of the younger ones who had never before heard him utter a syllable, spoke the following words:

'Bread and water—dungeon.'

Then, exhausted by his rage, his astonishment, and the exertion of speaking, he sank back in a state of the most profound inertness.

The chief of the guard, on whom fell the duty of carrying into execution Ptchaw-ptchaw's order, performed his office with the utmost discretion. He acted strictly in accordance with the command of his present ruler, but with as little offence as possible to him who might in future be his king. He conducted prince Poopoo with respect to a well-ventilated and furnished dungeon, and engaged a first-rate cook to make the prisoner's simple fare as palatable as it could be made. But not even these precautions could render prince Poopoo's imprisonment endurable. He managed with some difficulty to make his escape, and, disguising himself, got on board a ship which was just leaving Beleel. As he had no money he could not voyage as a passenger, and, as he had no knowledge of seamanship, he was obliged to take service in the humble capacity of cabin-boy.

They had not been at sea many days before a violent storm arose. The captain, whose chief

occupation was to cultivate his beard and moustachios, of which he had a very fine crop, did not know what to do. Every one of the crew was panic-stricken except the prince, who, like all great men, sought in the time of danger the opportunity of distinguishing himself. He jumped upon the poop and harangued the crew. He told them how he had read in some learned work, that oil, thrown upon the waves when in commotion, would immediately appease them, and proposed that the captain's hair-oil, of which he had a large stock, should be sacrificed for the purpose. This proposition was carried with only one dissentient voice — that of the captain. But the crew were now in a state of mutiny. They took possession of the oil and cast it upon the troubled waters; but, whether it was not of the right quality, or whether there was not enough of it — somehow the experiment wholly failed, and the sea was as outrageous as ever.

After this the crew got the boats out, and putting all the ship's provisions into them, got in themselves, and pushed off, leaving behind them the captain and prince Poopoo. The captain they refused to take because he had opposed them in the matter of the hair-oil; the prince, they jeeringly alleged, was so learned a man that if he were left in the vessel, he would be sure to discover some method of saving it. The ship drifted

on for some days, during which time prince Poopoo managed to support life with some cough lozenges which he luckily possessed. The captain who had no such resources was obliged to feed on leather, and died one night of a fit of indigestion, after having supped too heartily on a pair of boots.

The prince sat upon the deck for two days sucking lozenges, at the expiration of which time he beheld a long barren shore, in the direction of which the vessel was being speedily driven. When, however, it came within a couple of hundred yards of the shore, it struck violently upon a rock, causing prince Poopoo to take an involuntary header into the ocean; as he was an expert swimmer this accident did not do him any harm, and he speedily reached the shore.

On landing, he found himself surrounded by a crowd of the inhabitants. These were naked savages, and, being painted pea-green, presented a truly terrific appearance. They seemed, though, to exhibit towards him a rude kind of hospitality. They locked him up in a hut, and not only gave him plenty of food, but insisted on cramming it down his throat when he forbore to eat. After this treatment had continued some days, a great number of them came to the hut, and, having examined him with evident satisfaction, led him out. They then tied him to a post, and, leaving

one of their number to guard him, retired to some little distance, and held a consultation. The prince began to feel somewhat uneasy at this proceeding. As he had a smattering of every language in the world, he was able to converse with his hosts in their own barbarous lingo. He now addressed his guard:

'I don't understand,' he said, 'what you are going to do with me.'

'Why,' answered the savage, 'I am afraid they are going to roast you, but I hope they will change their minds and fry you in oil. I think that you will be very palatable done that way.' As he spoke, he regarded the prince with an admiring and hungry look which nearly caused that miserable person to faint.

'Oho!' continued the savage, delicately manipulating the prince; 'a good inch on the ribs!'

And he smacked his lips with an odious expression of satisfaction.

The prince, however, was by no means inclined to let himself be quietly entombed in the stomachs of the barbarians. The cords which secured him had been loosely tied, and his guard was too much interested in the discussion carried on by his companions to pay much regard to the prisoner. Silently freeing himself from his bonds, Poopoo administered a sound kick to his inattentive keeper, which caused that astonished

individual to turn the nimblest of somersaults. He then started off as hard as he could towards the sea, followed by all the savages, who having better wind than himself, speedily gained on him. But the prince had in his younger days often played a game in which he had feigned to be an antelope, whilst his youthful companions acted as hounds. This game had taught him a craftiness which was now of service. As the foremost savage sprang upon him he suddenly ducked, and that foremost savage, tumbling over him, bit the ground and likewise broke his nose. Breaking again away, the prince continued his course. Whenever any other of his enemies reached him, he ducked or dodged successfully, and at last reaching the sea, he threw himself into it and swam away from the inhospitable shore.

After he had exercised his arms in the ocean for some four-and-twenty hours, he found himself at a small island covered with the most luxuriant vegetation. He landed, and after proceeding some short distance, sat himself down on a stone utterly exhausted by hunger and exertion. He was just dropping off to sleep when his attention was awakened by a strange sight. Two serpents were fighting before him. The larger, which was evidently victorious, was black and venomous-looking. The smaller was of a beautiful vivid green colour, with a golden crest upon its

head. This contest interested the prince and he felt a great desire to assist the lesser combatant.

'I don't see why I should interfere,' he said to himself; 'they are both noxious brutes; but I certainly do like to see fair play.'

Thereupon he armed himself with a large stone and beat off the black serpent. The other was so extremely pretty that he approached near to it in order to examine it more closely. As he did so, the creature, hissing furiously, raised itself as if about to strike. At this demonstration he naturally retreated, and the serpent quickly disappeared in the bushes behind him.

'Ungrateful brute!' he murmured as he reseated himself.

'No; I am not ungrateful,' a soft voice replied.

He turned and beheld in the spot where the snake had disappeared the form of a beautiful woman, but with a delicacy of features and an unsubstantiality that he had never before observed in any human being. She was clad in green, and a large quantity of thick golden hair floated down her shoulders, to which was attached the uncommon appendage of a pair of wings.

'You have done me a great service,' she said, 'and, I repeat, I am not ungrateful. I am a Peri. The serpent you drove away was a hostile Div, who was on the point of overcoming me. If he had done so, I should have been compelled

to suffer a long and, perhaps, perpetual imprisonment.'

The prince politely replied that he was much gratified at the thought that he had been of service to so charming a lady.

'I presume,' continued the Peri, 'that you have no desire to remain on this island. If you have nothing better to do I will take you to Jinnistan, the land where we Peris reside.'

The prince assenting to this proposal, she seized him by the waist and bore him rapidly through the air. After ten minutes' voyage, during which time they traversed the whole globe, they alighted in Jinnistan, through which, as the Peri kept hold of the prince's arm, they journeyed with almost the same speed as before. The first part of Jinnistan which they entered was a barren plain, illuminated only by a perpetual twilight. Here were placed hollow pillars of iron in which vanquished Divs were imprisoned. The clanking of the chains and dismal howlings of these captive spirits, added to the gloom of the place, filled the prince with a terror which the presence of his protectress could not entirely dispel. As they proceeded the light gradually increased, till, when they reached the inhabited part of Jinnistan, it had become greater than any light which the sun gives to mortals. Yet, notwithstanding its brilliancy, it neither

dazzled the eyes nor caused any intolerable heat to the body. The ground on which it shone was covered with flowers of hues and perfumes unknown to men. Animals of all species roved in these plains; but Poopoo soon had an opportunity of discovering what these creatures were. A pretty little kitten came up to him and sported a few yards before his feet. Suddenly it began to swell and increase in dimensions. First it became a huge cat, then a tiger, and finally an immense hippopotamus. When it had attained this monstrous size it opened its jaws to their fullest extent and rushed at Poopoo, as if to devour him. But just as the prince began to fancy himself down the animal's throat, it changed its shape to that of a butterfly and flew off. Poopoo justly inferred from this that it was a Jinn who played this practical joke on him, and formed rightly an idea that all the other animals he saw were also Jinns. Turning round he was the more confirmed in this opinion by seeing, instead of the Peri, a white gazelle to which animal she had transformed herself. The gazelle walked in a very demure and lady like manner by his side, but the other animals played the most grotesque antics. An ape, after he had executed several other tricks, at last, twisting his legs round his neck, began to roll like a ball before the prince with great velocity. This idea

seemed to strike the rest of the Jinns as good, for, without more ado, they adopted the same form and began to roll in the same manner. Thus the prince was encompassed on his way by myriads of rolling apes. At length they arrived at the hall of the king of the Jinns, which was an enormous structure, built of gold and precious stones, and so high that the prince, looking up, could not see the top of it. On entering, he found that its length and breadth were proportionate to its height. The hall was crowded with Jinns and Peris, who, being in the presence of their king, were obliged to appear in their proper forms as handsome young men or women. Poopoo and his companion went the length of the hall, which, computed by our modern scale of distances, might be considered to be about twenty miles. At the other end was seated the king of the Jinns. On approaching him, the Peri separated herself from the prince and entered into conversation with his Majesty. At its conclusion she clapped her hands joyously and returned to the prince.

'His Majesty,' she said to him, 'has reminded me that there is an old prophecy that our enemies the Divs can only be completely subjugated by a mortal. He is desirous that you should attempt this achievement and has consented to my marrying you, should you prove successful.'

The prince, who was of an adventurous nature and greatly admired the Peri, assented readily to both these startling proposals. Immediately that he had done so several of the Jinns disappeared, and returned with the necessary means to equip him. They brought armour and weapons; and led in a large black horse, whose eyeballs were of fire, and whose nostrils emitted smoke.

'The armour,' said the Peri, 'will cause you to be invulnerable, and the weapons are such as will enable you to contend successfully against the Divs. The horse is himself a Div, but will be kept in subjection by this whip which I give you, and which, having the seal of Solomon on its handle, gives its possessor power against the Divs. But all these precautions will be useless if you disobey the instructions I give you. You are not to dismount from the horse until you have accomplished the adventure and returned. If you do dismount, your expedition must be unsuccessful, and the greatest possible misfortunes will threaten us. The Jinns and Peris will be so enraged with you that they will be as ready as the Divs to tear you to pieces, and you will never be able to marry me. The Divs, and perhaps the horse, will use many deceits to make you dismount, but be on your guard! The horse will take you straight to the habitation of the Divs,

which is an enormous cavern under seven mountains. Now, go.'

Prince Poopoo accordingly went. He had not travelled far before he saw an infant, seemingly about three years old, lying wounded on the road, and wailing bitterly. He stooped down and touched it with his riding-whip, when it expanded into a hideous Div, and fled shrieking away. He had not proceeded much farther before he met a beautiful maiden, who beckoned him with the most alluring gestures to dismount. To her he applied the same test and with the same result.

No other adventure befell him till he came in sight of the cavern of the Divs, from which issued fire and smoke. Here his horse began to limp as if he had got a stone in his foot. The prince, with the true instinct of a horseman, leapt off to examine the foot. Then remembering his instructions he attempted to remount, but the horse would not let him.

'Let me mount!' exclaimed the prince.

'If I do I'm——'

'Evil beast,' interrupted the prince, 'do you not see this whip?'

'Miserable mortal!' said the horse, emitting sparks from his fiery eyeballs, 'if you touch me with that whip, I will trample you to death. Fool! you have disregarded your instructions and are powerless.'

As he spoke the Divs began to rise in crowds from the cavern. The prince looked back and saw the Jinns and Peris behind, darting wrathful glances at him. By his side stood the Peri, his protectress, weeping and wringing her hands.

'You have lost me for ever,' she exclaimed, 'and I fear you must perish. Who can save you? I cannot.'

'I can,' said a voice.

The prince looked round and beheld a form brighter than any he had yet seen.

'I can,' said the form, 'I, Serosch, the angel whose duty it is to defend men against the Divs.'

As he spoke he put his hand on Poopoo's shoulder and drew him from the spot. Poopoo looked back and saw the Divs engaged in furious combat with the Jinns and Peris; but the Peri he had saved, regardless of the struggle around her, had thrown herself on the ground and was weeping bitterly. The next moment Poopoo was seated in the midst of one of the flower-beds in the palace gardens of Beleel.

We must now give some account of what had happened in Beleel.

The chief of the guard, when he discovered that Poopoo had escaped, trembled exceedingly for his head. He had, however, one hope which was well founded, and that was in the forgetfulness of the king. Ptchaw-ptchaw, having locked

up his son, never thought any more of him. He went on beheading and giving the bastinado to his subjects, till one day when he fell down in a fit of apoplexy. He was carried to bed and never rallied, but died, uttering these words,—

'Cut off the heads of all my people and bastinado the rest.'

After his death Pish-pish, the prime minister, provisionally governed the kingdom till the return of Poopoo. But, notwithstanding his abilities, he found that his want of authority rendered it very difficult for him to govern well. One day he was walking in the gardens, thinking of his difficulties and wishing for the return of the rightful king, when, to his surprise, he saw Poopoo seated amidst the flowers.

'My royal master!' said the minister, 'I am delighted to see you back.'

To his astonishment he received the following answer:

'Charming Peri, you have not, then, forsaken me?'

Poopoo was evidently mad. No one in his senses could have mistaken old Pish-pish for a Peri.

But, although he was mad, his return caused great joy throughout the kingdom. He was very harmless. He would sit quiet for some time in council, and then, putting his head under his legs,

would attempt to roll through the chamber in the manner in which he had seen the Jinns roll. This became so much a habit with him that an officer was specially appointed with a handsome salary, and the title of 'Untwister of his Majesty's legs,' to disengage his head from his legs whenever he began to perform this undignified action. Another of Poopoo's peculiarities was that, when he was on horseback, he could never be induced to dismount, and it was always necessary to drag him forcibly off his horse. All the doctors in the kingdom were called in to see him. They each of them assigned different causes for his malady, but none of them discovered a remedy. Old Pish-pish, however, who remembered the words with which Poopoo had greeted him, thought that he was suffering from love. Although the minister knew nothing of homœopathy, he fancied that in such a case likes might be cured by likes. He accordingly introduced to him all the beautiful princesses and high-born ladies he could find. The experiment was successful. Poopoo gradually recovered his senses, and fixing his affections on one of the beautiful princesses, married her.

On the night of the wedding the bride was alarmed at hearing outside the chamber a sound of weeping and fluttering of wings.

It was the Peri lamenting the loss of her lover.

THE MAGIC SWITCH.

Poor Lubin! how different was his wife now to what she had been when he married her! A healthy, good-humoured wench was she then, with rosy cheeks; but Time, with his glowing hand, had parched her cheeks and drawn the redness of them to the tip of her nose. Time had also changed the milk of human kindness in her to vinegar. But her muscular power he had left untouched. How Lubin wished that the meddler, who had so interfered with his wife, had gone further and deprived her of her strength!

After many efforts to control his wife by gentle measures, Lubin on one occasion resorted to the last expedient of marital authority. He attempted to make her submissive by means of a stick. Luckless was the day on which he did so. No sooner had he, in a feeble and hesitating manner, laid the stick upon her back, than she snatched it from his hand and chastised him with the greatest

determination. He never repeated the experiment. She did; every day afterwards.

Lubin, when he found his home too hot for him, naturally took refuge in the ale-house. There he would sit, sighing, smoking, and drinking, every evening. Usually very taciturn, he sometimes, when marriage was mentioned, delivered himself of this advice:

'Never marry a wife who is bigger than yourself!'

One evening—it was St. John's Eve—Lubin was so deeply engaged at the ale-house in sighing and drinking, that he quite forgot to note the time. When he did observe it, he was startled to find that it was long past his usual hour of departure.

This was a discovery which affected him disagreeably, since his wife always proportioned her beatings of him to the length of his absence from her. He had drowned all his faculties in ale, and nothing remained in his mind but dread of his wife. He, accordingly, soon came to the conclusion that his wisest course was not to go home at all. Having confirmed his resolution with another glass of ale, he tottered from the alehouse and proceeded in the direction opposite to that leading home.

He had not gone far before a neighbour met him.

'Ho! Lubin,' said he, 'are you aware that you are not going home?'

'Yes.'

'Are you aware that it is St. John's Eve, when fairies and witches have power?'

'Yes.'

'A fairy in the form of a beautiful woman may tempt you to kiss her; and when you have done so, you will lose your reason and your memory. You will not even remember your most intimate friends.'

'Or my wife,' added Lubin.

'Or you may spend a night with the fairies at their revels, and, next morning, discover that the night has extended a hundred years.'

'Then I should probably find myself a widower,' said Lubin.

'Or some malignant spirit may spring on your back, ride you till you reach your own door, and then hurl you into your house with a broken back.'

'I don't care; I'd rather meet the devil to-night than my wife.'

As he was determined to have his will he had it without further opposition. His neighbour left him, and he continued his way perseveringly, though in a somewhat erratic manner, taking for every two steps forward three to either side and one back. The high road along which he was

thus slowly progressing soon became offensive to him. Its straightness seemed a silent rebuke on the extremely oblique course his legs were going. He therefore went on the grass and was relieved from the painful consciousness that he was not going quite straight.

The moon was shining brightly, and Lubin attempted to join the amusement of looking at it to the occupation of walking. This it is not easy for a sober man to do; but it was to Lubin an impossibility. After nearly falling once or twice he gave it up. He then tried to stand still and gaze; but this his legs would by no means permit. Finally, he thought he would lie down in order to effect his object. He accordingly did so, and looked at the moon for some time till a cloud seemed about to obscure it, when he thought he would shut his eyes till the cloud had passed over. This he did. When he unclosed them, he found to his astonishment that there was an addition—but a very small addition—to the scene.

Upon a buttercup was seated a little creature about half as big as his finger. She, for it was a female fairy, wore a dress, the skirt of which was artfully manufactured from a leaf, and the boddice from the petals of a flower of the same kind as that on which she was sitting. Her dress was short enough to leave displayed a pair of the most ravishing little legs in the world. These she

swung to and fro with an affected carelessness, but real ostentation, which showed her to be a most accomplished little coquette.

'Well! Lubin,' said she.

'Well!' said he, somewhat astonished. 'You know my name, but I don't know yours.'

'Oh! I am generally called Buttercup. I have the charge of the buttercups — a most important office — and am therefore called by their name. You have managed to make yourself very drunk, Lubin.'

'Have I?'

'Yes! and you are therefore afraid to go home to your wife. I know your whole history. I think you are very badly treated, and have long thought of mentioning the matter to Oberon. He may find you a remedy.'

'I shall be very much obliged to him if he does.'

'He gives a ball to night. You had better accompany me, and I will introduce you to him. Come!'

So saying she jumped down from the buttercup.

'Is it far?' inquired Lubin.

'Yes! a long way for me to walk, several yards.'

'But I thought you fairies could go quicker than by walking.'

'So we can. We can go in our coaches of nutshell drawn by insects: but my coach is broken, and the squirrel our coachmaker is gone roving somewhere. I might go romping about on a bee or a blue-bottle, but,' said the little creature, drawing herself up with dignity to her full height, 'I don't think such a proceeding proper for a lady fairy like myself.'

'Perhaps I can carry you.'

'Thank you! You are very polite. Take me in your hand, and I will direct you where to go to.'

Lubin with his guide soon accomplished the distance which separated them from the place of entertainment. This was an open space under an oak-tree. Its limits were marked out by numerous glow-worms which served the double purpose of forming its boundary and of illuminating it. In order that they might give light satisfactorily, they were on this occasion allowed to turn their backs on his majesty the king of the fairies.

Buttercup entered the ball-room. Lubin hesitated on the threshold.

'Come in!' said Buttercup.

'But I'm too big for the place,' remonstrated Lubin.

'Come in, and you'll find that you are nothing of the kind,' said Buttercup.

Lubin accordingly entered, and found to his astonishment that his bulk had suddenly diminished, and that he now seemed not much bigger than his companion. They had not gone many steps before a male fairy with tallowy complexion and ferrety eyes, who looked not only ugly, but malicious, came up to them and said:

'Halloo! Buttercup, this is against rules.'

'Not at all, Dandelion; I have a right to bring a stranger if I like.'

'Not a mortal,' answered Dandelion.

'Well, I want particularly to introduce him to Oberon; I will be responsible for the breach of etiquette, so you need not trouble yourself about the matter.'

Dandelion, only half satisfied, walked off, grumbling and shaking his head.

'I must go and dance,' said Buttercup to Lubin. 'You must be only a spectator. After the first dance I will introduce you to the king.'

She accordingly went off, and Lubin began to look about him.

At the upper end of the ball-room (for we may as well style it so) was a natural dais formed by the rising of the earth about the roots of the oak. Around this dais the glow-worms were thickly congregated, and on it was placed a large snail-shell beautifully variegated, the throne of Oberon and Titania. Upon this throne were seated the

king and queen. Titania was habited in a robe of the finest gossamer; she wore a necklace of emmet's eyes, and fanned herself with the wing of a moth. Oberon's dress was formed of some gaudy tropical flower; over this he wore a hauberk made of the shell of an Indian beetle. The other fairies present were dressed in leaves and flowers, pretty much as Buttercup was.

At the bottom of the room was placed the orchestra, which was of insects, led by an old fairy, who wielded a baton made out of the shank of a grasshopper's leg. In this orchestra gnats acted as cornets, crickets as clarionets, blue-bottles and bees as violins, and a big humble bee did duty as violoncello.

Dandelion, who seemed to be master of the ceremonies, soon jumped upon the top of a mushroom which stood in the centre of the place. He clapped his hands for the music to commence. The leader waved his baton, and away went the orchestra, buzzing, humming, and chirping, in the most admirable time. The fairies all joined hands and began to dance round the mushroom in a ring, now inclining themselves on this side, now on the other, turning somersaults and capering in the most antick and agile manner. As they danced, the grass on which they trod seemed to grow more green and vivid. Nor was Dandelion idle on the top of his mushroom. With his

head and heels in the air, so that his legs formed with the upper part of his body an acute angle, he whirled round on that part of him which was left as the point of the angle with such rapidity as to make his form undistinguishable. The leader of the fairy band—not Oberon, but the musician—stamped and waved his baton with increased energy; the buzzing, humming, and chirping grew quicker and louder; the somersaults became more frequent and the caperings more outrageous; Dandelion spun round faster than ever. At last they all seemed to have had enough of it, and the music and dancing ceased.

Soon afterwards Buttercup, leaning on the arm of Dandelion, came up to the place where Lubin was standing.

'Give me a dew-drop!' she said; 'I am so thirsty. Thanks. Well, Lubin, I will now conduct you to Oberon.'

Accordingly, Lubin, accompanied by the two fairies, proceeded to the spot where Oberon was. Buttercup then with great respect told his Majesty the story of Lubin's grievances. Buttercup was a very pretty little fairy, and during her narrative the king chucked her several times very tenderly under the chin, a proceeding which seemed to rouse the jealousy of Titania, for she darted at the pair some very indignant glances. When Buttercup had finished, Oberon turned to

Lubin and said: 'Mortal, it is our duty and also our wish, to do whatever good we can to those of your race who deserve it. I have heard your story and will help you. Take this switch: so long as it is in your possession, your wife will be unable to beat you, whilst you may correct her. But take care that you exercise this power with moderation. Fairy gifts, if abused, always work harm to their possessors.'

Lubin went forward to take the switch, but Oberon stept back with a frown, and Dandelion, placing himself between the two, said to Lubin:

'Presumptuous mortal, dare not to take it from the hand of the king himself!'

So saying, he took it with an obeisance from Oberon and turned to Lubin. There was a most mischievous expression in this fairy's face as he did so. Lubin attempted to take the switch, but Dandelion drew it back and rapped his knuckles severely with it. The switch hurt like a cudgel. At the same time Lubin heard these unaccountable words:

'Get up, you drunken beast!'

* * * * * * *

Lubin awoke and found that it was morning. He felt cold and shivering, but had every reason to believe that he would soon be warmed by the cudgel that his wife, who was standing over him, held in her hand.

ULULALDE.

SOME centuries ago the Baron von Sichersitz occupied a castle which overlooked the Rhine. As this castle was situated upon a rock higher and more precipitous than any other in its neighbourhood, and as the river was more narrow at this point than anywhere else, it need hardly be said that the baron was extremely prosperous. Every ship that passed by his stronghold was compelled by him to pay toll, and, his castle being impregnable, no one could take from him the riches so acquired. The land as well as the river was a source of income to him. Possessing a numerous body of retainers, he would send them to stop such travellers as might be passing in the vicinity, and not suffer them to proceed until they had paid a certain fixed sum for the privilege of coming so near the seigniory of Sichersitz. The baron being powerful and wealthy, was naturally much respected, and perhaps would have had no cares, had he not been a father. He

had one child, a son named Theodore, who was the cause of much vexation to him. This young gentleman busied himself little in the proceedings which brought prosperity to his family, and, in the part he did take, he showed a most undutiful opposition to the acts and opinions of his worthy father. He went so far as to allege that it was wrong to take toll from the ships, and when he was sent by his father as one of a band to attack travellers, he suddenly took the part of the assailed, fleshed his maiden sword in the fat sides of the seneschal, who commanded the band, and put the rest of his father's vassals to flight. The baron shook his head when he heard of the misdirected prowess of his son, and took care that he should not again have the opportunity of doing such mischief.

Theodore was accordingly left to do just as he liked, so long as he did not interfere with his father, and spent his time chiefly in hunting or in roaming about the woods, and dreaming that he was a renowned knight errant and succourer of distressed damsels. In one of these rambles he became acquainted with an old man named Vincenzo, who lived in the forest near Sichersitz; and this acquaintance soon ripened into intimacy. Vincenzo, in consequence of his venerable appearance and solitary habits, had, when he first came into the country, been popularly considered to be

a hermit. When, however, it was discovered that crucibles formed a part of the furniture of his hut, and when the nostrils of those who passed by his abode at midnight were assailed by fumes from the burning of unknown herbs, he gained the character of a wizard, and became as much an object of horror as he had been of reverence.

One day Theodore entered the hut of Vincenzo, with an unusual expression of gravity on his countenance. On being asked to explain the cause of his seriousness, he addressed Vincenzo in the following words: 'I fear you will hear what I say with as much incredulity as I, at one time should have done, had the same story been narrated to me. Yesterday I was walking alone when a strange indescribable sensation affected my whole frame. At the same time I was conscious of the utterance of these words: "Ululalde loves you." I say that I was conscious of their utterance, for I cannot assert that I heard them; yet were they as distinctly conveyed to my intelligence, as though the sound of them had entered my ears. Extraordinary as the circumstance was, I should, perhaps, not have noticed it further, had it not been repeated on two subsequent occasions with some variation of the words. As I was sitting at supper I experienced the same sensation, accompanied by words not

quite the same. The words then were: "Cruel man, are you, then, insensible to the affection of Ululalde?" The same thing occurred to me again as I was retiring to rest, except that, on that occasion, the words were: "Come, come to Ululalde!"'

Vincenzo, on hearing this statement, manifested neither surprise nor contempt.

'From the ignorant,' he said, 'have you to expect incredulity—not from the wise. What you have just told me, I can well believe. You do not know, though I do, that millions of beings, unseen by mortal eyes, swarm in the four elements. Sylphs inhabit air, nymphs water, salamanders fire, whilst gnomes have their abode in the interior of the earth. These spirits have a limited power of communicating with mortals of peculiar temperaments; and these mortals may render communication freer by means of certain charms and spells, but chiefly by exercising a strong power of volition. Some sylphide, salamandrine, or other female spirit, having, doubtless, conceived an affection for you, calls upon you to return it. Who Ululalde may be I cannot say, but, if you wish, I will raise some spirit who can give you information concerning her.'

Theodore, having expressed a desire to have the spirit up, the old man proceeded to make the

necessary preparations. He drew a large circle on the floor of the hut, and inscribed within it several cabalistic signs. He then placed various herbs in a censer and set fire to them. He next caused Theodore to stand on his right leg within the circle, holding his left ankle with his right hand. Finally he himself stepped into the circle, and, muttering certain words, waved a wand rapidly round his head. The spell shortly began to operate. A chill gust swept through the room; the fire, which at first, was of a dusky red, burnt blue, and Theodore, to his alarm, beheld a tall shadowy figure, of which he could see nothing distinctly but a pair of large eyes, that were gazing at him with an expression by no means amiable. Vincenzo seemed to display equal consternation and astonishment on beholding this apparition. He stared at it with open eyes and mouth.

'By Jupiter!' he ejaculated, 'I have brought up the wrong one.'

He then reversed the direction of the wand, turning it round the other way. But the spectre, although it receded, did not vanish. 'Wish him away,' shouted Vincenzo; 'I am doing so, but my will is not of itself strong enough.'

'I wish him most cordially at the devil,' said Theodore.

As he spoke the phantom disappeared.

Vincenzo drew a long breath of relief.

'That was a dangerous mistake I made,' he said, 'but how could I have been wrong?'

Thereupon, he opened a large black volume, and with knitted brow proceeded to con the hieroglyphics it contained. In a few minutes his brow became smooth.

'I see what was the mistake,' he said to Theodore. 'You must stand on your left leg and hold your right ankle with your left hand.'

Theodore, accordingly, took up this new position. The herbs were again lighted, and Vincenzo waved his wand. In a short time the fire which had been burning brightly became on a sudden almost extinguished; a hot blast, as if from a furnace filled the room, and a luminous figure appeared, that in a low musical tone addressed Theodore as follows:

'I, one of the spirits of fire, bound by the power you have used against me, and knowing your wishes thus speak to you. Many hundreds of years ago, when the spirits of fire could commerce more with men than now they do, our ruler loved a mortal maiden. He took her with him to his habitation within the earth and made her his queen. But she, though all that could please eye, ear, or taste, were brought to give her joy, pined foolishly after her home on earth, and died. Yet, ere she died, she left a daughter,

Ululalde, whose nature is mortal half, but half the same as ours. Her life extends far beyond that of men, and her wondrous beauty never fades. But she cannot, as we do, pass through substance and tread on air. Far beneath the roots of the mountains; far beneath the lake which lies below the surface of the globe, and prevents curious mortals from prying into the secrets of earth's centre, dwells Ululalde. There has she remained since her birth; but though she has never set foot amongst mortals yet knows she all that happens to them. Each day does she look into a marvellous mirror in which is pictured truly the world and that which it contains. In this mirror she saw you, once as you wandered alone in the wood, twice in your father's castle, and on each occasion expressed the passion which the sight of your image had created in her. Speak not to me! I know what you are about to say, and your voice would break the spell which holds me. There is but one way to Ululalde. From the north to the south pole runs a tunnel by which you can reach the sub terranean abodes. But the entrances to this tunnel, hemmed in by eternal ice, are inaccessible to mortals, and so cold is the air there that no living thing can live when exposed to it, except the giants of the frost. These lie at the foot of the mountains, whose craters form the en-

trances to the tunnel, in a state of continual drowsiness.'

The spirit here touched with his forefinger the wick of an extinguished taper which was in the hut, and it immediately burnt with a pure white light.

'This,' he resumed, 'is our fire; not that which is used by mortals on earth. Hold this taper in your hand and you cannot be hurt by the cold of which I have spoken. Moreover, when you grasp it, my fellows and I will convey you to the spot whence you may of yourself seek Ululalde——'

Here Theodore, who had for some time been striving with difficulty to maintain his equilibrium, over-balanced himself, and brought his right foot violently to the ground.

The spirit instantly vanished.

Vincenzo shook his head gravely.

'She is of a fiery nature,' he said; 'I would advise you to have nothing to do with her. A woman is bad enough, but one who is both woman and salamandrine——'

He stopped and again shook his head.

Theodore, however, laughed scornfully, and seized the taper. No sooner had he done so, than he felt himself quickly borne from the spot by invisible hands.

When he recovered breath after his rapid

progress, he looked around and discovered that he was on the top of one of the mountains mentioned by the spirit. Through the dim twilight, which perpetually prevailed in this part, he saw, as far as his sight could reach, only ranges of mountains of ice; whilst nothing disturbed the otherwise unbroken silence that reigned in the place, except the deep and regular snoring of the giants, who lay sleeping in the valley beneath him. In the crater of the mountain, he beheld a winding path which led below, and by this he descended, still assisted by the invisible agency which had conducted him from the hut of Vincenzo. How far or at what pace he descended it was impossible for him to tell; but he descended with great rapidity. At last he saw an opening in the tunnel, and straightway proceeded, or rather was impelled to proceed, through it into the interior of the earth. He at first went along a narrow passage, obscurely lighted, though whence the light came he was unable to discover. Presently he came to a large open space, which seemed to his eyes a dark, dreary void, but to his other senses, by no means an unpleasant place. He heard about him, the voices of innumerable singing birds, the soft rustling of trees, and the sound of gently falling water, whilst at the same time he smelt the mixed fragrance of various odoriferous flowers, and felt a heat like that produced by the rays of a southern sun. Yet could he not see

birds, trees, water or flowers, nor did any but the faintest light illumine the place. Without letting his surprise at all stay his progress, Theodore hastened on his way till he came to a spot where the path branched off in two directions. As he paused, not knowing in his perplexity which road to take, he heard a very low, but distinct and musical voice, sing in his ear the following words:—

The child of earth, the child of fire,
  She who has never seen the sun,
The lovely maiden you desire,
  To be sought only to be won,
She lies upon her couch of gold
  With her first sadness on her heart,
Sighing and weeping to behold
  Him who can make her grief depart:
    Now! gentle knight,
    As you long for the sight
    Of the fair Ululalde, turn to the right!

With bandy legs, with monstrous mouth,
  And eyes that each on each would stare,
But that, between, his nose uncouth
  Comes down and makes the boundary there—
This dwarf deformed, this guardian grim,
  Stands in your path nor will he stir;
And you will have to fight with him
  Ere you can hope to get to her:
    So, gentle knight,
    If you're willing to fight
    The terrible Tantaran, turn to the right!

Theodore, on hearing the first stanza, prepared to proceed in the direction pointed out. On hearing the second, he hesitated; but love and valour triumphed. He drew his sword and boldly went forward. He had not gone far before he met his expected antagonist. The dwarf raised an enormous club he held in his hand, and struck at him. Theodore dexterously avoided the blow, and plunged his sword into the body of Tantaran. To his astonishment, this thrust, which he thought would end the contest, had not the slightest effect. The dwarf smiled contemptuously, and said: 'Other weapons must be used against me; I am proof against the power of steel.' Theodore, nothing daunted by this, pressed against him, and, at the same time tripping him up, threw him to the ground. Then, seizing the club which fell from the dwarf's hand, he hammered with it at the pommel of the sword, that still remained in the body, until he had fastened his opponent to the ground as neatly and securely as a carpenter might do, were he to nail a bit of leather to a board. Having thus disposed of Tantaran, he walked on, but had not gone many steps when four beings of singular appearance crossed his path. The first of these, which was a figure completely white, addressed him as follows:

'We, the representatives of the spirits of the

elements, each offer through you a gift to Ululalde. From these gifts you must select one, and one only. I, one of the spirits that dwell in crystal vaults beneath the sea, or in the sedge-covered caves that lie under streams and rivers, offer to you this.'

Thereupon it held out to Theodore the fin of a fish.

The second spirit that seemed transparent, and whose figure was so little defined as to be hardly visible, spoke thus:

'I am one of those spirits that live in the air and have power to bridle the wind. I bring you this.'

And it showed in its hand the feather of a bird.

The third spirit appeared to be of the same kind as that which had been raised by Vincenzo, and had instructed Theodore.

'Fire is my element,' it said, 'I bring you this.' And it held out a cinder.

The fourth was an ugly and mischievous-looking dwarf, with a conical cap on its head. This it doffed with mock solemnity and said:

'In the caverns of the earth we dwell and pelt each other with such stones as these.'

So speaking, it raised a magnificent diamond above its head.

Theodore chose the diamond, naturally sup-

posing that it would be the most acceptable to Ululalde. Hardly had he done so, when he heard a great splash, and, turning round, saw that the water spirit had disappeared. A bright light flamed up suddenly and became extinguished. The salamander was gone. An angry gust of wind howled for an instant. The sylph had vanished. The gnome took leave more ceremoniously. It again doffed its cap, made a low bow, and, gathering itself into a ball, trundled out of sight with great rapidity.

Theodore, on the departure of these spirits, found himself before a huge door which, touched by him, flew open with a musical sound. The excessive light then displayed almost blinded him. He, however, recovering himself, entered and saw that he was in an immense hall of crystal, whose roof was supported by pillars of the same material. Round these pillars twined flames which seemed to exist of themselves, without being produced by the combustion of any substance, and which wound and unwound themselves in the most independent manner. The hall was filled with beautiful golden-haired damsels, under whose bright skins fire seemed to flow instead of blood, and whose eyes sparkled with supernatural brilliancy. These crowded round the new comer, making remarks which put him somewhat out of countenance.

'His nose is a little too long,' said one.

'He is certainly not handsome,' remarked another.

'No!' observed a third. 'I don't think much of him. But let us lead him to the princess and hear what she says.'

They accordingly conducted him to the top of the hall where lay Ululalde, looking into her wonderful mirror. She rose as he approached, and he gazed at her surprising beauty with astonishment. Ululalde, however, did not seem to regard him with much satisfaction.

'You are not good-looking,' she said, passionately. 'The mirror has lied.'

Then, taking it in her hand, she dashed it into a thousand pieces.

'Let us see,' she continued, 'whether you are more wise than beautiful! What gift have you brought me?'

Theodore showed her the diamond.

'Fool!' she ejaculated. 'You have brought me what is as common with us as pebbles are with you. Had you brought me the fin, I could have passed through water like a fish. Had you brought me the feather, I could have flown through air like a bird. Had you brought me the cinder, I could have lived in fire. But you have given me that which of all that was offered was alone worthless. Father!' she cried, loudly,

and throwing herself on the couch she began to weep for the loss of the mirror she had just broken.

Smoke filled the hall, and in the midst of it appeared a form around whose brow was a rim of fire. Theodore trembled to see this figure frown: but the frown was directed to Ululalde, not to him.

'How often am I to be summoned hither by your vagaries?' it said. 'What now?'

'I don't want that man,' said Ululalde. 'Take him and roast him at the great fire.'

'I will indulge your freaks no longer,' was the reply.

Then turning to Theodore the spirit said:

'Back, to the place from whence you came.'

Theodore became insensible, and when he awoke found himself lying in his bed at Sichersitz, uncertain whether he had or had not been dreaming.

ZOZO AND ZARADA.

On a certain day, in a certain year, which the writer cannot more distinctly specify than by saying, that it was sometime between the deluge and the present century, there was rejoicing in Atounozabad.

Fatazadeen, the king of that city, had, after many years of connubial felicity, at last been blest with a child, a daughter to whom the name of Zarada was given.

The most eminent astrologers were, of course, commanded to foretell from the horoscope the fate of the princess Zarada. They mostly concurred in prognosticating that, if she escaped certain evils, to which they did not particularly refer, her life would be more or less prosperous. One of these wise men, however, hazarded a less indefinite prophecy. He declared that upon a certain day, which he mentioned, a great evil threatened the princess. This alarming announcement threw the whole city into commotion.

The king doubled the guard round his palace, and assembled all the doctors of the city in the antechamber of the princess. He likewise ordered all his subjects to go into mourning, until the day, when the evil would be imminent, had passed. It may be seen, therefore, that many people were made uncomfortable by the prediction, but of all none were more so than the rash astrologer himself, who saw that, if he were wrong, he would certainly lose his credit, and might possibly lose his head. Luckily for him on the expected day, the princess cut her first tooth. Though it is somewhat hyperbolical, even for an oriental, to call such an event a great evil, the astrologer gained additional fame by his prediction. Nevertheless there were some who doubted his sagacity. In particular, the grand vizier Klozanneer, a sceptic, who believed in nothing except his own wisdom, hinted his incredulity by an expressive, but vulgar oriental gesture, similar to that sometimes resorted to in Europe, when the tip of the thumb is applied to the tip of the nose, and the fingers are extended. Henceforth, the current of the princess's life flowed smoothly; and she was as beautiful as she was happy. The poets of Atounozabad, abandoning all other subjects, wrote and sang of nothing but her charms. She was, they said, straight as a cypress; her face was like the moon, and her eyes like stars. Not that

they had ever been permitted to see her; but she deserved, nevertheless, all their eulogies.

When she had arrived at a marriageable age, Fatazadeen held a consultation with Klozanneer, as to what he should do with regard to her.

'I want you,' he said to the vizier, 'to give me advice concerning my daughter.'

'Beautiful is she,' replied the other, 'and the wise have said: "A little beauty is better than much wealth, and a fair countenance is a salve for heart sickness."'

'Wonderful are the words of the wise,' said Fatazadeen, 'but as they have no particular reference to my daughter, I do not at present care to hear them. The question is whether my daughter is to be married, and, if so, to whom.'

'The princess Zarada, O king,' said the Vizier, 'is certainly of an age to marry, but whether she should marry now, or hereafter, or not at all, is a question which requires consideration. My advice, however, is that, in deciding the matter, you follow the inclination of your own royal mind.'

'But I don't know my own royal mind.'

With that he fell into a profound reverie, and Klozanneer dutifully hastened to follow his example. In this state they both remained for some time, but at last, finding that their medita-

tions were productive of nothing but drowsiness, they broke up the conference.

Some few days after, Klozanneer appeared before the king with a radiant countenance.

'Oh, king,' he said, 'if you are resolved that your daughter shall be now married, I think I have discovered the means, by which you may get desirable suitors. After I left you on the day you spoke to me concerning the princess, I was passing through the bazaar, when a wonderful magician came up to me and said:—

"If you choose, I will take, in less than a minute, your likeness; and if it is not the exact image of you, cut off my head."

As I know what mistakes the painters of Atounozabad make in taking portraits, these words roused my curiosity. I went with him into a chamber. He made me stand for an instant before a small box, which had long legs and large eyes, and then told me I might go. This morning he sent me twenty small square cards, on each of which was an exact image of myself. For these I paid him but one gold sequin.'

'It surpasses belief,' ejaculated Fatazadeen.

This exclamation referred to the story, but the courtiers who heard it supposed it rather to express disbelief of the concluding sentence of the vizier's statement.

'The magician,' continued Klozanneer, 'can take the likeness of the princess. You can, then, send a card to each of the neighbouring princes, and there will be suitors enough for your daughter.'

This counsel pleased the king. He sent 'cartes de visite' of the princess to twenty young princes of the neighbourhood. As soon as the princes saw them, they all immediately fainted away, so smitten were they by the beauty of the princess. Nineteen of them as soon as they recovered, prepared to pay their addresses to Zarada in their proper characters as princes. But the twentieth, Prince Zozo, determined to win her affections in another way. He disguised himself as a young merchant, and, accompanied only by his slave Soso, hastened to Atounozabad.

As soon as Zozo reached this city, he sought for the means of access to the princess. Her apartments looked upon a garden, and into this Zozo introduced himself and his slave, by means of a golden key, or in other words, by bribing the custodian of the garden. Zozo brought with him a lute which, he thought, might help him to captivate the princess. Soso, whose only object was to occupy his time as agreeably as possible, provided himself with a bottle of arrack. After some time, when the prince's

patience and Soso's bottle were nearly exhausted, a veiled lady, richly dressed and of graceful mien, appeared at the window to water some flowers. The deference paid to her by a female attendant who was with her, evidently showed that this lady was the princess herself. Zozo immediately proceeded to attract her attention. He heaved forth so deep a sigh, that the startled princess dropped the watering pot upon his head. When he had recovered from the embarrassment which this little incident caused him, he began, after a short prelude, to sing to his lute a song, praising the beauty of the princess. He averred that the power of lightning for fascination and destruction was contemptible to that of her eyes; that the bridge by which houris pulled true believers into Paradise was nothing to the bridge of her nose; and that the air which she inhaled, she sent back loaded with a fragrance, greater than that which could be produced by all the flowers of the garden of Eden. He also enunciated divers other poetical truths concerning her beauty, but was interrupted by Zarada, who asked him how he could know all this, when he had never seen her face.

Zozo was silent.

'Well!' said she, 'I have seen your face, and I like you too well to let you fall into the hands of old Katchaweezel, the keeper of the seraglio,

who is sure to be prowling here about this time. So I give you warning that you had better go.' This the prince refused to do. He, however, proposed to mount into the apartment of the princess where he would be safe from the observation of Katchaweezel.

To this imprudent proposition the princess assented, and Zozo, after having impressed on Soso the necessity of extreme vigilance, climbed up to the window and disappeared into the interior of the harem.

The attention of Katchaweezel had already been attracted to the spot. Walking at some distance from the apartment of the princess, he heard the sound of a lute. Knowing that this was Zarada's favourite instrument, he listened complacently to the tones which he believed to be elicited by her charming fingers. When, however, a deep masculine voice added its melody to that of the lute, the expression of his countenance completely changed. Unwilling to encounter alone a desperate lover, he returned to fetch two of his guard, and thus reinforced, proceeded softly to the place whence had come the tell-tale sounds.

Soso saw them approach and rapidly mounted a tree which was near, hoping that the foliage would conceal him from the inquisitive gaze of the new comers. But he hoped in vain. Katcha-

weezel observed him and demanded who he was and what he did there.

Thus interrogated, Soso ventured on an explanation more ingenious than credible.

'I am,' he said, 'the prophet Mahomet. Hearing of the beauty of the princess Zarada, I have just descended from the seventh heaven in order to behold her.'

Katchaweezel would have naturally disbelieved this statement, even if the hiccup which closed it had been wanting.

'And what celestial liquor, O holy prophet, have you been imbibing?' he asked, as the effluvium of the arrack was wafted down upon him. 'Come down, you rascal!' he added in a stern voice.

Soso obeyed this mandate, but no sooner had his feet touched the ground than he ran away as hard as he could.

Katchaweezel had not discovered the lute nor, he was convinced, the player of it. It seemed to him possible that both might be found in the harem. He, therefore, in company with one of the guards went to search for them, leaving the other guard to watch the window from the outside. We will now learn what was happening within the harem. When Zozo had entered Zarada's apartment she said to him:—

'It would be a pity if you had not an oppor-

tunity of judging whether I really deserve those fine compliments you paid me just now.'

With that she unveiled herself.

If Zozo was affected by her likeness, it may be imagined that he was much more so by the reality itself.

He fell into a deep swoon from which he was with difficulty recovered.

When he came to himself he sighed and said:

'Ah! charming princess, my happiness would now be perfect, could I exclude the thought of the despair which awaits me in the future. When twenty princes are coming to sue for your hand, what hope can there be for me?'

'If your success depended only on me,' she answered, 'I assure you that your chance would be much better than that of those princes who come to ask for my hand, without taking the trouble of making love to me.'

Zozo began to congratulate himself upon his disguise.

'And now,' said the princess, 'you had best retire, or Katchaweezel may surprise you. It is too late!' she exclaimed, as she turned her head. 'Here he is.'

Zozo found himself in the hands of two men, and began to doubt whether his disguise was a matter for self-congratulation.

'Cruel princess!' he exclaimed, for he believed

with injustice that she had entrapped him, 'your perfidious conduct has thrown me into the deepest dejection.'

'And I will throw you into a dungeon as deep,' added Katchaweezel, laughing loudly at his atrocious witticism.

He accordingly consigned Zozo to the promised dungeon, and in due time brought him up before Fatazadeen.

'This man,' he said, shortly, 'I surprised in the apartment of the princess Zarada.'

'Cut his head off!' was the king's equally brief answer. Zozo, alarmed at this speedy disposal of him, declared who he was, and requested the king to satisfy himself of the truth of his assertion which, he said, he could do in three or four days.

'Before the antidote is brought from Irak,' observed complacently Klozanneer, who was present, 'the person who is bitten by the snake may be dead.'

Fatazadeen, not relishing the comparison between himself and a snake, darted an indignant look at his vizier; then, turning to Katchaweezel, he said: 'Go! let him be executed tomorrow morning.'

Zozo, relegated to his dungeon, thought that the best thing he could do was to knock his brains out against the wall; but having only

succeeded in giving himself a violent headache, he lay down and was soon fast asleep.

He had not slept long before he was awakened by a light in his prison, and looking up, beheld the princess Zarada standing before him.

'My presence here,' she said, 'may assure you that you unjustly suspected me of complicity with Katchaweezel, and that I was as much horrified as yourself at his appearance. I have come to free you and to fly with you, if you will take me as your wife.'

Delight at this sudden change of affairs, and remorse for his late suspicions, held equal possession of Zozo's heart.'

'There is no time to lose,' continued the princess. 'Follow me without noise!'

They accordingly proceeded with caution until, to their dismay, they walked softly into the presence of Fatazadeen, Katchaweezel and a third person. But the dismay of Zozo was changed to pleasure when he discovered in the third person his own father who, hearing of his son's secret expedition, had followed him and explained all to Fatazadeen.

'Well!' said Fatazadeen, 'as my rebellious daughter occupies herself in setting free my prisoners, I renounce her and give her up to prince Zozo.'

The princess was about to observe that she

infinitely preferred being put to death with her lover, who, however, stopped her by whispering, 'I am prince Zozo.'

The day afterwards the nineteen princes arrived in Atounozabad, but returned immediately, with great disgust and dissatisfaction, to their respective countries, when they discovered that Zozo had been before them and obtained the hand of the princess.

THE STRATAGEMS OF THE LADY ISOLDA.

The Lady Isolda de Grandmarais opened her lattice, ostensibly to look at the moon, but, in reality, for quite a different purpose. As she gazed, a muffled figure stepped forward, and, placing himself in a romantic attitude under her window, sang in a low voice the following ditty:—

Look forth, look forth, my fairest,
  There's none to see us now;
The night is of the rarest
  To hear a lover's vow:
Your porter—he so fat is
  He can't do else but sleep,
Then from your opened lattice
  My own Isolda peep.

Look forth, look forth, my darling,
  To see us now there's none;
The mastiff at me snarling
  I solaced with a bone:

From castle top to basement,
Save you, all are asleep,
Then from the opened casement
My dear Isolda peep.

The invitation to the lady to look out of her window was perfectly unnecessary, as she had done so before he began to sing. The singer, however, who had taken some pains to compose his song, was not to be deterred by this incident from uttering it.

'What are you doing here at this time of night, Albert?' asked the lady.

'Well!' answered Albert, 'considering that you told me to come, you will excuse me if I confess that I am somewhat surprised at the question.'

'Propriety compels me to be unconscious of such an invitation. As, however, you are here, I can acquaint you with the plans I have formed for effecting my elopement with you. You know Yeux-de-Groseilles?'

'Yes, he is the greatest fool I know.'

'He may be. He has, however, done me the honour to fall in love with me.'

'Then he has more sense than I supposed he had.'

'My father destines him to be my husband, but has not yet broken the matter to him, and Yeux-de-Groseilles is wrongly impressed with

the idea that my father does not favour his suit. He has also committed the mistake of supposing that I am favourable to him. I have told him that I will meet him to-morrow evening, at dusk, at the chapel some little distance from the castle. Now, what do you think I intend to do?'

'I know what I intend to do,' replied Albert, 'and that is to kick Yeux-de-Groseilles.'

'Stupid fellow! I will tell you no more of my schemes than is absolutely necessary. Be here to-morrow evening, with two horses, at the time when I am to meet Yeux-de-Groseilles, but not at the same place. Wait for me under the trees at the eastern end of the castle. And now begone as softly as you can.'

With that she shut the window.

Albert walked away as stealthily as he could —but in vain. The mastiff had finished the bone, and now barked ungratefully at the donor of it. The porter, awakened, got up to kick the dog. As he proceeded for this purpose, he came across Albert, who immediately knocked him down. But the porter being fat and heavy, his fall caused such a concussion to the whole castle, that the Baron de Grandmarais's terrified retainers, starting from their sleep, rushed to the spot to learn what was the matter. Seeing Albert, they instantly secured him, and consigned him to the baron's hereditary dungeon.

Next morning, the Baron de Grandmarais, surnamed Long-nez, from the extraordinary length of his proboscis, was breakfasting in a manner suitable to his position and the period in which he lived. A vast sirloin of beef (which had not then received the honour of knighthood) occupied with dignity the right of the board; a venison pasty adorned the centre, and a boar's head frowned sternly on the left. Nor were liquors befitting such viands wanting. On the right hand of the baron stood a huge flagon of Rhenish, on his left an equally capacious tankard of ale.

The baron was engaged in discharging another important duty besides that of breakfasting. He was holding a court, and exercising his judicial functions, which were indefinite in power. Beneath him sat his steward, who acted as clerk, with writing materials before him, not for use, but in order to give a kind of dignity to the proceedings. Before the baron stood the culprit—the same that was captured the night before—whose dress and manners seemed to show that in station he was little, if at all, the inferior of his judge. About the room stood the baron's servants, who were there in the capacity either of witnesses or guards.

The porter and some of the servants were examined as to the circumstances of the discovery

and seizure of the prisoner; and after them was put forward Hugo, another servant, who, partly from his natural fear of the baron, and partly from a guilty consciousness that he had been fast asleep all night, and therefore knew nothing at all about the matter, waited with great trepidation to give his evidence.

'Do you recognise the prisoner as the man who was sneaking about the castle last night?' said the baron, addressing Hugo.

'Yes.'

'Did you see him last night?' timidly interposed the steward.

'No.'

'Would you have recognised him if you had seen him?' urged the baron.

'Yes.'

'Very well! it's all the same,' said the baron, darting a reproachful glance at his officious steward.

The baron, having now heard all the evidence, clothed his countenance with a look of the greatest gravity and importance, preparatory to pronouncing sentence.

The steward, observing him put on this look, hastened to whisper that it might be more regular to ask the prisoner if he had anything to say.

On this the baron, with no great willingness,

altered the judicial expression of his countenance, and asked the prisoner for his explanation.

'I am Albert de Chose,' was the reply, 'nearly your equal in rank and power. I shall not tell you why I am here; but it is absurd to suppose that I came here for your spoons. If you inflict any punishment or degradation on me you will repent it.'

The baron turned to the steward and said peevishly:

'I knew how it would be: if I had heard only one side I should have had no difficulty in deciding, but now I am amazingly perplexed.'

He pished, he pshawed; he looked up to the ceiling and down to the floor. He shook his weighty head, and laid his right forefinger alongside of his enormous nose. But it was all in vain. His embarrassment seemed to increase. At last his glance rested upon Hugo, who was endeavouring to screen himself behind another servant. As he looked, his perplexity vanished, and a cheerful smile spread over his features.

'Put Hugo in the stocks,' he said.

'But,' the steward ventured to say, 'how can Hugo be wrong?'

'Right or wrong, put Hugo in the stocks.'

This happy thought satisfied the baron's craving for punishment, and permitted the cold water of prudence to extinguish his desire of inflicting

punishment on the real culprit. The steward would have still interceded for Hugo, but observing that his master's head was buried in the tankard, he desisted, knowing that the baron always sealed his acts as irreversible by a draught of ale.

Hugo was therefore conducted to the stocks, and Albert de Chose was allowed to depart unmolested.

Long did the baron cogitate as to what was the cause of Albert's intrusion into his castle, but hour after hour elapsed without his having gained an idea on the subject. There was one person who could have given him information, but of her he did not think. The Lady Isolda had been caused some trepidation by the tidings of the capture of Albert. When, however, she heard that he had been allowed to leave the castle, she gave a sigh of relief, and proceeded to dress for dinner.

On that day the baron and his daughter dined together. During the first part of the meal they were silent. At length the Lady Isolda gently exclaimed:

'My father!'

'My daughter!' replied the baron, in a voic hollow — not with emotion, but from his mouth being then enveloped in the tankard he had just emptied.

'I am sorry you let that insolent Albert de Chose go this morning. Do you know that he is one of my lovers?'

'Isolda!' said the baron, *pianissimo*, in a tone of gentle reproach.

'I daresay you are at a loss to discover why he came here last night. He came in order to serenade me.'

'Isolda!!' exclaimed the baron, *crescendo*.

'I have told him to meet me at the chapel near the castle this evening at dusk.'

'Isolda!!!' roared the baron, *furioso*.

'I need not tell you that I do not intend to keep the appointment.'

'But why did you not inform me of all this before?'

'Maidenly reserve prevented me.'

'Maidenly fiddlestick!' exclaimed the baron, bouncing up and kicking a servant who happened to be in the room out of it.

'Now, papa,' said Isolda, quietly, 'if you won't be so extremely violent I will inform you of a plan of mine which, I think, is a good one. I should like this Albert de Chose to be punished for his presumption. You shall go to this place of meeting instead of me. You shall recapture Albert, and put him in your stocks, or your dungeon, or do anything else you like with him.'

'The idea is not a bad one,' said the baron, much mollified; 'I will do as you propose.'

As soon, therefore, as he had finished his after-dinner nap, he put on his armour, summoned his retainers, amongst whom was the unfortunate Hugo, released for the occasion from the stocks, and set out, chuckling at the idea of the unpleasant surprise which he was about to give the amorous Albert. At the chapel waited Yeux-de-Groseilles, leaning against the wall, with his eyes shut and his arms folded. Had the baron put on his spectacles as well as his armour, he would have seen that he had made a mistake in his man. As it was, he concluded that it was Albert that he saw, and proceeded to recapture him. Ordering his retainers to disperse and gradually surround and approach the unconscious man, he himself, accompanied only by Hugo, walked stealthily up to him. As soon as he reached him he uttered two exclamations expressive of surprise. The first was:

'Why, he is asleep!'

The second was:

'Why, it is Yeux-de-Groseilles!'

The second exclamation roused Yeux-de-Groseilles from his slumbers. Not recognising the baron, he made a hostile rush at him. The baron prudently retreated, but in avoiding Charybdis he fell into Scylla.

Hugo, who was in the rear, burning with resentment at the treatment which he had received that morning, was inflicting imaginary castigation on his master by flourishing his foot within an inch of the most prominent part exposed to him. The retreat of the baron, to his discomposure and the horror of Hugo, made the castigation real. The baron assailed thus strenuously in the rear, jumped forward, and Yeux-de-Groseilles seized him by the nose.

'Why, this nose,' ejaculated Yeux-de-Groseilles, giving it a tweak in order to satisfy himself of its identity, 'must belong to the Baron de Grandmarais.'

'Let it go!' roared the baron.

Yeux-de-Groseilles accordingly released it.

'What brings you here?' enquired the baron.

'Well, to tell you the truth,' answered Yeux-de-Groseilles, with a confidential nod, 'I came to meet your daughter.'

'And Albert de Chose is not here — ha! an idea — let me think.'

The baron cogitated profoundly for some time. At last he said:

'My daughter has misled me. Yeux-de Groseilles, will you come back with me?'

Yeux-de-Groseilles agreed to do so, and they proceeded to the castle together.

It is needless for us to acquaint our intelligent

readers with the fact, that Isolda took advantage of the opportunity afforded by her father's absence, and went off with Albert de Chose.

At the castle gate the baron met his steward, who was pale and trembling.

'Your daughter, the Lady Isolda, has gone off with some one,' stuttered the steward.

'And the jewels of her late mother?' said the baron, in a tone of the deepest emotion: 'has she taken them? Speak, varlet, speak!'

'No,' answered the steward.

The baron gave a sigh of relief.

'Well,' said he, 'perhaps it is the best thing that could happen. She plagued me exceedingly.'

'She has made egregious fools of us,' said Yeux-de-Groseilles, gloomily.

'Never mind,' responded the baron, cheerfully, 'we will, notwithstanding, have a jolly night together—you and I.'

KING GUGUSTA AND HIS RAVEN.

IF it be not now, there possibly once was—situated somewhere—the country of Amba-Bamba. Over this country King Gugusta ruled. We cannot exactly give the date of his reign, but we confidently declare that it was after the introduction of fig leaves and before the invention of pantaloons. The ministers of King Gugusta were wise and respectful, his subjects peaceable and prosperous. No domestic dissensions troubled him; no enemies threatened him; and yet he was discontented and uneasy. He felt that he could trust no one. The servile demeanour of those who approached him was to his mind suggestive of lying; and even if he met any person who seemed rough and independent, he thought that his manner was but the cloak to some deceit.

One day this king was seated under a tree in his garden, bemoaning his fate:

'Wretched man that I am,' he exclaimed, 'how-

ever enviable I may appear. I stand alone above others, and between them and me lies a mist of deceit through which I can see nothing clearly. It were better for me if I dwelt in the midst of a desert, far apart from all men, for then, though there would be none I could trust, there would be none to delude me.'

As he concluded, he heard a mocking laugh which seemed to come from above. He looked up with indignation and saw a little old man in a tight-fitting green dress, who sat cross-legged on the lowest bough of the tree.

'How dare you laugh at me?' enquired the king, hotly.

'Oho!' was the answer. 'You don't know what a treasure you've found. I dare speak truth to you because it is not to my interest to deceive you; and not you with all your subjects could hurt me. Why, look here!'

He suddenly vanished from the tree, and a large green caterpillar dropped into the king's mouth which was wide open from astonishment.

The king hastened to spit the nauseous insect out, when it sprang up to the tree, and at the same moment the old man reappeared on the bough.

'Aha!' he cried, 'I was the caterpillar. So you wish people to speak truth to you?'

He whistled, and a large raven flew to him and perched on his shoulder.

'Whenever this raven hears a person lie,' continued the old man, 'he croaks and straightway that person is compelled to speak truth. I will give the bird to you; but I warn you that I have often given men what they desired, and yet they never liked my gifts.'

He whistled again and the bird perched on the king's shoulder.

'Farewell,' said the old man and disappeared.

The king went towards his palace with the bird perched upon his shoulder.

On his way he met his daughter Gugul.

'And what have you been doing, my child?' he asked, affectionately.

'Oh! I have been engaged in looking after my beautiful flowers.'

The raven croaked.

'I mean,' she said, hurriedly, 'that I have been talking to Parwa, the handsomest of all your pages. Oh! he is so charming. I intend to marry him, but we have not yet decided how we are to manage the matter.'

'Halloo!' said King Gugusta, seizing his terrified daughter by the wrist, 'here is something that I should never have discovered myself. Where is the old hag who has charge of you?'

The duenna was called into his presence.

'How now, mother Momba?' said the king, 'how is it that you allow my daughter to make love to my pages?'

'Make love?' echoed mother Momba with a peculiar and prolonged accent of astonishment on the last word; 'why, I have watched my dear little mistress unceasingly, and if she has been guilty of any such act, she has deceived me as much as she has your majesty.'

The raven croaked.

'Well, the fact is,' resumed mother Momba, winking at his majesty, 'that they both gave me money in order to let them meet, and altogether I have made by them a very pretty little sum.'

The king, on receiving this information, ordered his daughter to be locked up and given to the keeping of some more trustworthy person than mother Momba. Parwa ran away. As for mother Momba, she received the punishment generally bestowed on old women who have done wrong in Amba-Bamba. She was tied on a donkey with her face to the tail and was then conducted round the city, whilst all the people squirted dirty water in her face. The king was so irritated by the intelligence elicited by his faithful raven that he had a fit of the spleen from which he did not soon recover.

When he got well again, he learnt by means of

his raven much that astonished him. Every person that came into his presence was forced to speak what he never intended to say. Very soon the raven became generally considered at court a most objectionable bird, and even the king began to think him rather a nuisance.

It was a regular custom at the court of Amba-Bamba that a crowd of dancing-girls should assemble before their monarch, and, whilst they danced, sing the most extravagant eulogies of him. King Gugusta was very fond of this diversion, and found the flattery extremely soothing to his ears. On one, and the only, occasion during the raven's presence at court, the girls appeared before the king, and dancing, sang as follows:

Oh! what a wonderful monarch is ours!
  Are we not lucky to have such a king?
His mind seems to have quite miraculous powers,
  And, oh, what a pleasure before him to sing!
His face is so grand, and his eyes are so tender;
  How my heart beats when they're looking at me!
I declare, I consider the sun in its splendour
  Is n't a sight half so fine as is he.

But this humbug the raven was not going to countenance. He croaked, and the astonished damsels felt themselves compelled to sing this stanza:

Is n't our monarch a wonderful booby?
  If we could change him 'twould be a good thing:
So stupid as he upon earth there can few be,—
  And, oh, what a nuisance before him to sing!
How foolish he's looking—how foolish and sombre!
  His hand on his foot and his foot on his knee:
I declare, I consider that old mother Momba
  Is n't a greater old woman than he.

The king started up with a violent oath, and the frightened girls rushed away. Then, darting an angry glance at his raven, he left the room; but the faithful bird would not desert him, and gravely hopped after.

As King Gugusta retired he was met by the chief minister, Focusso, who stopped him on an affair of business.

'Your majesty knows,' he said, 'that the interior of your kingdom is infested by a band of rebels, whom we find difficult to subdue. One of their number, however, has agreed to betray the rest if your majesty will promise, not only to pardon, but reward him. I need hardly say that it is desirable to make this promise, although,' he added, with as near an approach to a wink as his respect for the king would allow, 'we may subsequently find the performance of the promise impracticable.'

The king, not being under the same restraint as his minister, put his finger to his nose and

freely winked at him. The rebel was then brought in.

'If you betray your comrades,' said the king to him, 'I promise to elevate you to one of the highest posts in the kingdom.'

The raven looked perplexed. He seemed to hesitate between respect and duty. He, however, did his duty, and croaked, though feebly.

'I mean, you rascal,' shouted the king in despite of himself, 'that I will elevate your head on the highest post in my kingdom. Curse the bird,' he ejaculated sharply, and turning round, he wrung its neck.

* * * * * *

It might be supposed that because the raven was dead, the story as regards him would be at an end. There could not be a greater mistake. King Gugusta was sitting, a little pricked in his conscience for the deed he had done, but, on the whole, well satisfied that he had got rid of the pest, when he happened to turn his head, and to his amazement, saw a white raven seated on his right shoulder. The old raven was black, but this being white and also impalpable, King Gugusta naturally presumed that it was the ghost of the former. He was much startled by the apparition, but consoled himself with the idea that it would soon leave him. When, how-

ever, he found that it had taken up a permanent position on his shoulder, he became much perturbed. He lost his appetite, slept little, bit his nails, and was continually turning his head towards his right shoulder. He would also walk for hours in solitary places, unaccompanied by any other person. On one occasion, he was walking on the sea-shore, when he was accosted by a stranger.

'Good morning, King Gugusta,' said the stranger. 'I suppose you find the raven somewhat inconvenient.'

'How do you know I have a raven on my shoulder?' answered the king with some surprise. 'Nobody else can see it except myself.'

'Ah! I can see things that the inhabitants of the earth cannot.'

'What are you, then?

'I am a merman.'

'But where is your tail?'

'Oh! I only wear that on state occasions, when I go in the procession and blow my horn before Neptune—and that kind of thing. But never mind my tail. You want to get rid of that ghostly raven. The only way you can do it is by applying to old Magello, to whom I know the original raven belonged, and who, I suppose, gave it you. But I don't know where he is. One of the fishes, perhaps, can tell us. I will

call up the salmon. He has travelled both in fresh and salt water, and is most likely to know.'

The merman then took a conch from his waist, and blew upon it a peculiar note; whereupon a salmon of at least five and twenty pounds' weight rose to the surface of the sea and, on being tapped on the nose with the conch, opened his mouth and looked intelligent.

'Do you know where Magello, the magician, is?' enquired the merman of the fish.

'When I was a brandling,' began the salmon.

'Nonsense!' interrupted the merman with severity. 'You never were a brandling.'

'Well! I have been so many things, that perhaps I cannot remember. At all events when I was a very little fellow, I used to go up a large river, whose name I can't tell, and I recollect that Magello used to live in a cave by the side of the river; but I know he has moved since.'

'And where has he gone to?' asked the merman.

'I have not the slightest idea.'

'Pooh!' said the merman, but, suddenly seizing the king's arm, he pointed upwards and said:—

'Do you hear what the lark says?'

King Gugusta listened; and though the lark

sang as he thought any other lark would sing, it seemed to him, as he became more attentive, that he could distinguish these words in the song.

'The land holds him not, nor yet the sea;
And in fairy-land you will find him to be.'

'To fairy-land you must go,' said the merman. 'Swallow this wafer, and you will soon find yourself there.'

The king took the proffered wafer and swallowed it. A cloud passed over his eyes. When he again could see distinctly, he found himself in fairy-land, which is a place that cannot be described. King Gugusta's only idea on the subject was that he had got into the middle of the place where the sun sets. He was on the extreme verge of this enchanted territory, which was bounded by a golden balustrade. On the other side of this was absolutely nothing; and King Gugusta, seeing nobody, and not knowing what to do, amused himself, until something should turn up, by leaning over the balustrade and spitting into space.

He was interrupted, whilst engaged in this occupation, by a tap on the shoulder, and, turning round, he beheld Magello, the little old man who had given him the raven.

'Aha!' said Magello, 'so you could not get rid

of the raven quite so easily as you thought! Never mind! It shall be all right. But as you have taken the trouble to come here, you may as well see something of the place. Come into the temple of Allegory! It is worth seeing.'

They accordingly entered a vast building which stood opposite to them, and King Gugusta saw there much that would have puzzled him, had not Magello acted as interpreter.

Before them were a crowd of beings who were all striving to make their way in a certain direction.

'Representation of Life,' said Magello, laconically.

The way of most of these lay through a black lake which it was not easy to cross. Some of the swimmers, not strong enough to contend against the current, were driven into a whirlpool and sank. Others, tired and disgusted with their exertions, made for a landing-place which was at the side of the lake. Others again made for the only still water in it; but those who did so were immediately swallowed by the mud there accumulated. The rest crossed in safety.

'The lake is Adversity,' said Magello, 'the whirlpool Despair, the landing-place Crime, and the mud Sloth.'

As he spoke, a bright-winged thing suddenly started out of the mud and flew away.

The king turned enquiringly to Magello.

'Genius,' was the answer, 'has occasionally been generated in the mud of Sloth.'

Those of the crowd who were not compelled to cross the lake, proceeded by a path illuminated by a bright sun; but a hideous monster hovered above most of those who went this way, his mighty wings hiding them from the sun and casting them into the deepest shadow.

'The sun,' said Magello, 'is Prosperity, and the monster Care.'

Those who crossed the lake and those who came by the path soon joined and proceeded together, but it was to be observed that, whilst the former went forward briskly and energetically, the latter were feeble and languid. Many dropped off from various causes, and some lay in a pleasant bower and discontinued their journey altogether.

'The name of the bower is Content,' said Magello. 'Now come and I will show you something else.'

So he took the king to another part of the temple where lay sleeping a large, healthy, and beautiful woman; and above her fluttered a mischievous sprite, who employed himself in painting the face and nose of the woman, and in sometimes cutting her flesh; but she still slept

and her wounds healed almost as rapidly as they were made.

'The woman is Nature,' said Magello, 'and the sprite Art.'

'Pretty!' yawned the king 'very pretty! but I came here in order to get rid of this infernal ghost or bird that sits on my shoulder.'

'Very well!' said Magello 'if you are tired of this, let us go!' So he led him to a place where there was a large tree whose trunk was of gold, whose leaves of emeralds and whose fruit of rubies. On the branches of the tree sat many birds, and amongst them the old original raven, looking very sleepy and disconsolate.

'He wants his spirit back,' observed Magello.

No sooner had the king approached within a few paces of the tree, than the form on his shoulder was attracted towards the old raven, and seemed to disappear into him.

Immediately the raven gave forth a loud croak which made king Gugusta shudder.

'And now that you have accomplished what you wanted,' said Magello to the king, 'you can swallow this wafer and go back to Amba-Bamba.'

The king accordingly swallowed the wafer, and found himself in the antechamber of his state room.

This he wished to enter, but was obstructed by the guard stationed at the door.

'Do you know who I am?' said the king. 'I am king Gugusta.'

'If you are,' said the guard, reflectively, 'you have been dead a year—and therefore' he added with sudden decision, 'you can't be king Gugusta.'

Without attempting to confute his logic the king seized him by the collar, threw him aside and entered the state apartment.

To his amazement he beheld the page Parwa seated on the throne and in the act of having his toe kissed by the prime minister, Focusso, who was looking very miserable.

King Gugusta had actually been absent a year, although he fancied he had been away but a short time. Parwa, in the meantime, had married Gugul and succeeded to the throne. Being a weak youth and much elated by his good fortune, he used to spend the greater part of his time in having his toe kissed by his principal subjects. That ceremony had just been performed by all his subjects present, and was about to be gone through for the second time when the old monarch made his appearance.

King Gugusta gazed with astonishment at Parwa, and then shouted to him:

'Come out of that, sir, immediately!'

Parwa, hearing his voice, started up, thereby kicking poor old Focusso under the chin and throwing him on his back. He then attempted to fly, but those who were present seized him. King Gugusta was very indignant. At first he determined to have Parwa's life, but, on the solicitations of Gugul, he relented, and contented himself with changing the cushion, which had been profaned by the touch of Parwa when he sat upon the throne, for another.

MAÎTRE TINTAMARRE'S STORY.

KING PEPIN sat troubled with the uneasy sensation of not knowing what to do. He occupied himself for some time in contemplating his boots, which were curiously turned up at the toes. When he had exhausted all the attention he had to bestow on these, he yawned.

Faire-des-Farces, his jester, stood on his left hand with an expression of thought upon his countenance worthy of a Lord Chancellor. He had used up all his ready stock of buffooneries, and was attempting in vain to devise others. King Pepin yawned again.

'Is there anything for me to do?' he asked, wearily. 'What do you say, Gros-de-Ventre?'

The Baron Gros-de-Ventre had a great reputation for wisdom. He was slow in giving an opinion—and when he did give one, it was perhaps not worth much—but he had a wonderfully solemn and knowing way of shaking his head, which was very impressive.

'Well, I say ——,' answered the baron, pausing and shaking his head. 'I say ——,' he repeated.

'So say I,' cried Faire-des-Farces.

The indignant baron, forgetful of the presence of royalty, immediately aimed a blow at the jester, who avoided it by ducking; and the blow, to the horror of the striker, fell on the right ear of king Pepin.

'Mille tonnerres!' shouted the monarch.

Gros-de-Ventre hastened to apologise, but the royal wrath was not to be appeased.

'Your awkwardness,' said the king, 'has lost you your domain of Beaupré, which I hereby declare forfeited to me.'

The baron, inspired by the desire to regain his property, explained in the most eloquent terms how it was a monarch's greatest virtue to forgive.

'I have no objection to forgive you,' said king Pepin, 'but I shall keep Beaupré, as I like the little place very much. I have long resolved to get hold of it on the very first opportunity.'

Gros-de-Ventre, perceiving that his persuasions would be of no avail against this foregone conclusion, sank into a state of sulky silence.

Faire-des-Farces brightened up when he saw what mischief he had done, but the faces of the other companions of the king remained clouded by the perplexity which the endeavour to dis-

cover what his majesty was to do, caused them. Grosgoulu bit his lip, Lourluron scratched his head, and Mimuseau thoughtfully rubbed his nose. After some time, light spread simultaneously over their countenances. They had, each of them, produced an idea.

'Perhaps, sire,' said Grosgoulu, 'you might agreeably occupy the time which hangs heavy on your hands by eating?'

'Ah!' exclaimed king Pepin, derisively.

'Or by drinking,' added Lourluron.

'Bah!' exclaimed king Pepin, contemptuously.

'Or by sleeping,' concluded Mimuseau.

The king, having no more interjections ready, contented himself with aiming an angry glance at the last speaker, which caused him to feel smaller than he had ever before felt in his life.

The three worthies on the unexpected failure of their suggestions, relapsed into their former gloomy reflection.

'I have also an idea,' said Faire-des-Farces. 'I am dry of witticisms, and feel as stupid as a counsellor. As I don't think Messires Grosgoulu, Lourluron, and Mimuseau, are capable of supplying my place, Maître Tintamarre had better be called up. He is sometimes amusing.'

'Call him up, then!' said the king, with a yawn of increased vigour.

It was time for Maître Tintamarre to appear.

If the king yawned again, there was danger that he might dislocate his jaws.

Maître Tintamarre, the king's minstrel, appeared. He made a profound obeisance to the monarch and said:

'Perhaps, sire, you would like to hear a pathetic ditty which I have recently composed.'

'Great heavens!' exclaimed king Pepin with a look of alarm. 'Have all my subjects engaged in a conspiracy to murder me? I am already nearly dead with weariness, and you would now give me the "coup de grace."'

'Well!' said Tintamarre, after some consideration, 'perhaps the history of my life would amuse you. It contains wonderful adventures.'

'We will, then, have it,' said the king; his countenance assuming an expression in which curiosity was tempered with dignity.

Tintamarre cleared his throat and began:

'My life has been so strange that I cannot suppose it to have commenced in the ordinary manner. But, since I cannot remember the time of my birth, and since no one ever alluded to it as being at all marvellous, I must, however unwillingly, presume that I came into the world in the usual way. I was born in Provence, and my father was a bird-catcher. I soon was able to assist him materially in his occupation, for, being possessed of a wonderful power of singing, I so

charmed the birds with my voice that they fell an easy prey to my father.'

'I suppose,' said king Pepin, 'that you sent them to sleep, for I have observed that your songs have frequently that effect on human beings.'

'Not so, sire. Ravished by a harmony which so much exceeded theirs, they flew to my feet and sat there, with their beaks open and their heads on one side, inattentive to all except the sounds I uttered. My father found this method of taking them as successful as his former method—that of putting salt on their tails—was the contrary. I soon grew tired of the ignoble employment of acting as a lure to small birds, and prepared to seek my fortunes in the world. My father gave me his blessing, which, he said, was the most valuable present a father could bestow on his son. Whether it was or not, it was all I got from him, and, having received it, I set forth on my travels. I reached Marseilles without adventure, and, finding there a ship bound for Smyrna, I went to the captain of it and offered myself as one of the crew. He was at first loth to engage me, but on hearing that I could sing, he readily accepted my services. We had been at sea some days before the captain remembered my accomplishment. One evening, however, when we were somewhere off the coast of Africa, he called and

told me to sing. I obeyed. The effect of my song was wonderful. The captain and all the crew, unmindful of the working of the ship, crowded round me to listen. The fishes raised themselves from the sea, and even the stars twinkled with emotion.'

'But,' interrupted king Pepin, 'how is it that you can never sing with such effect to us?'

'Ah! sire, shortly after this time I caught a confounded cold, which spoilt my voice and left it no better than that of an ordinary mortal. But to resume: all nature seemed to be moved except an infernal rock which was too hard to be melted by my melody. This rock happened to be just in our way, and as the crew were too much engaged in listening to me to attend to their duties, the ship struck upon it and sank. Of the fate of my companions I am quite ignorant. As for myself—managing to rise to the surface of the sea, I swam vigorously away towards the African shore which was just in sight; but I should never have reached it had I not received most unexpected assistance. I had not swum many strokes before I saw approaching a huge sea-monster, that had fasted four-and-twenty hours—'

'How did you know that he had fasted for four-and-twenty hours?' asked the king, suspiciously.

'You will confess, sire, when you have heard me, that I had very good reasons to know. I attempted to sing and charm the brute, but the sea-water got down my throat and I only coughed. The monster came close to me. I saw there was no way of escape. If I were seized, I knew I should be crushed to death by the horrid jaws which opened upon me; so, I took the initiative—'

'Why!' exclaimed Faire-des-Farces, 'you don't mean to say that you swallowed him?'

'No, but I sprang down his throat before his jaws could close on me. The monster was evidently astonished. He did not shut his mouth for some minutes, and I took advantage of the light afforded me during that time, to examine the apartment which I had entered; I mean the stomach of the animal—'

'And what was it like?' said the king.

'A small room of a leaden colour and perfectly empty.'

'Whew!' whistled Faire-des-Farces.

'You see, sire, I had reason for saying that the animal had fasted some time.'

'Go on! I will not doubt you again.'

'Had I been dead, I have no doubt I should have agréed with the monster, but being alive, I had no idea of making myself agreeable to him, and was so restless that he speedily brought me

up and sent me spinning into the sea. When this happened, I swam away as fast as I could, but I had nothing further to fear from him, for, looking at me with extreme disgust, he turned his tail on me and went off in the opposite direction. He had got rid of me at a very short distance from the coast of Africa, and thitherward I swam. Before I had gone far I turned a sudden somersault and found myself in a fisherman's net. I was then drawn to shore in company with some small fishes. The Moorish fishermen who dragged me in, as soon as they discovered that I was not a fish, were on the point of throwing me into the sea again; but one of them, a very sinister-looking fellow, spoke some words to the others, whereupon they changed their minds and retained me. They carried or rather drove me—kicking and prodding me when I did not go fast enough—to the base of a hill on the top of which was a fortress. Up this hill was I pushed, and delivered into the charge of the commander of the fortress, who gave particular orders for my reception. Oil was heated and a huge cauldron brought forth into which I was carefully put. Boiling oil was then poured into the cauldron; every inch of whose interior was at the same time stabbed with the spears and swords of the Moorish soldiers—'

'But how could that be?' asked the king, with incredulity. 'How could you have escaped being burnt to death by the oil and stuck to death by the spears?'

'By not being in the cauldron at all,' answered Tintamarre, triumphantly.

'You have just said—'

'That I *was* in the cauldron. Certainly! But the cauldron being placed on the brow of the hill, and the bottom of it coming out at the time when I was put in, I rolled down the hill before any harm was done me. I could not be expected to remain in a cauldron which had no bottom to it.'

As no one disputed this proposition, Maître Tintamarre went on with his story.

'This tumble which gave me a few scratches and nothing more, saved me from my persecutors. As soon as I ceased rolling, I got upon my feet and fled from the abominable locality as fast as I could. I travelled on for many days, subsisting on the very poor cheer of wild fruit and brackish water until I came to a city. What was singular about this city was that it seemed to be entirely inhabited by crows. They were perched in the shops and at the windows of the houses, and walked about the streets cawing at each other in a manner which reminded me more of the habits of men than birds. At last I came to a palace

before which were sentry-boxes, occupied by crows. I entered the palace and immediately an old crow walked in a stately way before, as if to announce me. He conducted me to a chamber in which were assembled many crows; and on a chair was one to whom the others seemed to behave with great deference. Seeing him to be a bird of distinction, I made him a low bow which he graciously returned. He then cawed to me, but being unable to understand him, I simply apologised for my intrusion and withdrew. As I was leaving the palace, I heard from one of its chambers the sound of a human voice. I at once entered the chamber and saw a very pretty girl with dishevelled hair groping on her hands and knees about the room. I addressed her in the only language I knew and she replied in it, although with somewhat of a foreign accent. I asked her to tell me why she was thus engaged, and why the city was inhabited by crows. In answer she told me her history, in which I found a complete explanation of all that had astonished me. She spoke as follows:

"In me you behold, perhaps, the most miserable of mortals. My name is Coquinilla. I am the daughter of King Coco, and the sister of Coquillo. My father, who was king of this city, died some few years ago, and my brother succeeded him. On his accession to the throne,

Coquillo attempted to conciliate everybody, and especially two maiden aunts, sisters of my father, who had betaken themselves to sorcery.

"Alas! my unfortunate brother, your intentions were good, but how horribly you mismanaged the matter! The names of my two aunts were Pequinilla and Quenipilla. The former only practised sorcery in order to benefit mankind; but the latter was the most mischievous and malignant of creatures. We of course preferred Pequinilla; and when my brother invited her to dinner, he asked the prime minister and the very best of society to meet her. Quenipilla we disliked: we were also ashamed of her; so when she came to dine with us, the company she met was of a very different sort to that with which we had honoured her sister. When she arrived, she looked about her, and angrily exclaimed:

"'So you don't think me worthy of meeting such company as you provide for my sister!'

"I imprudently said that if she did not like our dinners, she had better not come to them. These words, I fear, only inflamed her wrath. Turning to my brother, she said:—

"'I will be revenged on you. Take you and all your subjects the form of crows!'

"No sooner were the words spoken, than my brother and all his guests, underwent the trans-

formation she had commanded, and flew out of the room.

"'Nor shall you escape, you minx,' she said to me, 'you shall remain in this room, without eating, drinking, or sleeping, until you find my ring which I leave in it. When the ring is found, your brother and his subjects will recover their natural shape; but I will take care that you do not find it too easily.'

"As she spoke she waved her wand over me.

"'And,' she continued, 'I will also take care that no one helps you in the search. No one shall enter this room until you find the ring.'

"With that, she drew her wand over the threshold.

"At this moment, Pequinilla appeared at the door.

"'Stop, sister Quenipilla,' she said, 'although I have little power to hinder your charms, what power I possess I will use. I pronounce that any stranger may be at liberty to enter this room, and assist my niece in her quest.'

"They both then left the room, and I have been engaged ever since in looking for this nasty ring."

'When the fair Coquinilla had finished her story, I politely stooped down to help her in looking for what she wanted. In a very short time, I found the ring, and placed it on her finger.

She did not seem to be conscious of what I had done.

"That is the ring—is it not?" I said.

"What ring? Where?" she answered.

"The ring I have placed on your finger."

"Ah!" she cried, "now I can understand why I did not find it myself. Now I know what was the spell my wicked aunt cast upon me. I can neither see nor feel the ring."

'As she spoke, her brother and many of his subjects came into the room, all of them restored to their natural forms. With them came Pequinilla.

"I congratulate you, my dears," she said, "that you have got out of this scrape at last; and now let us go and see if we cannot pay my sister out for her tricks."

'So saying, the goodnatured old lady took the arm of her nephew, and I followed with Coquinilla. We proceeded to the habitation of Quenipilla, which was a cavern just outside the city. She was standing over a cauldron filled with liquid, which she stirred up with a long spoon. This liquid must have been extremely filthy, as I observed dead toads floating on the top of it. She had just tasted a spoonful of the odious stuff with evident relish, when she became aware of our presence. Immediately she saw us,

she uttered a most singular scream, which I will imitate as nearly as I can. Who-o-p!'

'Mère de Moïse!' ejaculated king Pepin, waking with a start, 'what do you mean by screeching in that horrible manner?'

'The scream, sire, was part of my story.'

'Confound your story! I don't believe a word of it.'

'What, sire!' exclaimed Tintamarre, holding up his hands, as if with horror; 'can you suppose that I should tell you lies?'

'Well! true or false, make haste and finish it.'

Maître Tintamarre accordingly resumed his story:

'No sooner had Quenipilla screamed, than I beheld an enormous wart on the tip of Coquinilla's pretty nose. Turning to Coquillo, I saw that his proboscis was similarly adorned; and putting my hand up to mine, I discovered with horror that I had not escaped any more than the others.'

King Pepin and his followers here involuntarily put their hands to their noses to make sure that Tintamarre's imitation scream had not had the same effect.

'Pequinilla, whose nose was unaffected, turned red with indignation when she saw the result of her sister's malice.

"Wicked Quenipilla!" she said, "you perhaps forget that you are now in my power."

'She then waved her wand, and Quenipilla immediately became a toad.

"But, bless me!" exclaimed Pequinilla, "what is to be done to remove the warts from your noses?"

"What!" said Coquillo in alarm, "do you mean to say that we cannot get rid of them?"

"Oh!" sobbed Coquinilla, "being changed into a crow, and being obliged to look for a ring, without eating, drinking, or sleeping, are nothing to having such a wart on one's nose."

'Pequinilla reflected for some time.

"I think I know how you can be cured," she at last said. 'There is a spring flowing from the Mountains of the Moon, in the interior of Africa, which I believe to be a remedy for any deformity caused by enchantment. It is guarded by a fierce dragon; but, I have no doubt, this valiant stranger will undertake the achievement of getting the water."

'I—the valiant stranger—had considerable doubts as to the advisability of getting rid of a wart at the risk of being eaten by a dragon.

"It will be a heroic action," continued Pequinilla, "and you will run no danger. I can lend you a ring that will cause you to be invul-

nerable, and also my broomstick, which will carry you straight to the spring."

'These words decided me, and I determined to act like a hero. Providing myself with an empty phial, I put the ring on my finger, mounted my mean-looking but swift-going courser, the broomstick, and in less than two seconds found myself at the spring, within three yards of its guardian. The dragon came at me open-mouthed: I immediately cut off his head; but, strange to say, no sooner was the head off, than it reunited with the body, and the dragon was as sound as he had been before. He then attempted to swallow me, but, owing to the enchanted ring, could not hurt me at all. When he saw that, he retired, and, coolly scratching his ear with his hind leg, said to me:

"We can't hurt each other; so it is no use for us to take the trouble of attempting to do so any further. What do you want?"

"To fill this bottle from your spring."

"Then you can't."

"Well!" I answered, "I think I can."

'I then cut off a little bit of his tail, and, before it could join with the rest, put it into the left-hand pocket of my hose. After that, I cut off another bit of the tail and put it into the right-hand pocket of the same garment. Whilst the dragon was wistfully regarding his mutilated tail,

I advanced and cleverly cut off one of his paws. This I crammed into my coat pocket and buttoned tight up.

"Oh!" cried the dragon, "I can't stand this; give me my paw with the bits of my tail, and you shall have the water."

'I accordingly restored what I had taken from him, got the water, mounted my broomstick and returned, having been absent just half an hour.

The water had the desired effect, and our noses recovered their pristine beauty. So pleased was Coquillo with my services, that he offered to me the hand of his sister. This I accepted readily, and we were married. "Ah! Coquinilla, the days of our happiness were too short. Would that thou ——'

'Stop!' exclaimed king Pepin, 'your story is long enough without your entering into a digression which promises to be tedious.'

'Well! sire, I will continue in the straight path of my story. Some time after our marriage, Coquinilla became so seriously ill that it was doubtful if she would recover. One day I was expressing to Coquillo my sorrow for her dangerous state.

"If she dies," I said, "I shall miss her very much."

"Not for long," he answered, with a peculiar smile on his face.

"Why not?"

"Ah!" rejoined my brother-in-law, putting his pouncet-box to his nose, "you perhaps do not know our customs. When a princess of the blood royal marries a man beneath her in rank, and she dies first, her husband is invariably burnt alive on her funeral pile."

"But why did you not tell me of this before I married?"

"What!" exclaimed Coquillo with much feeling, "do you think I could have been so cruel as to deprive poor Coquinilla of a husband she desired? I assure you she was extremely fond of you."

'I never thought I could have felt so ungrateful for the affection of a pretty woman as I felt at that moment. I returned with increased anxiety to learn how my wife was. She was worse. There was no time to be lost. Putting into my pocket everything valuable that I could carry, including my wife's jewels, I fled precipitately, and managed to leave the country in safety. I have other curious adventures to relate; but perhaps, sire, you have heard enough.'

'Quite,' was king Pepin's brief response.

'I like your story,' said Faire-des-Farces; 'you are a man of great ingenuity, and if I were to vacate my office, I don't know any man more competent to fill it than yourself.'

'And what do you think of the story, Gros-de-Ventre?' said the king.

The baron's temper was disturbed by the events of the morning, and the desire to vent his spite on somebody caused him to speak more rapidly than usual.

'If there is a time,' he immediately began, 'when one feels bound to express oneself in the most condemnatory terms, it is when——'

'Dinner is served,' said a gentleman usher, flourishing a white satin napkin and opening the folding doors which led into the banqueting hall. King Pepin jumped from his throne with alacrity and went to dinner, followed by all the others except the baron.

Gros-de-Ventre hemmed thrice after he was interrupted, and then again proceeded to crush Tintamarre with his criticism; but, observing that he had no audience, he reserved his opinion and followed the rest.

SOOGA SOOKA'S REIGN.

SOOGA SOOKA IBN AL TOFEELIKA obtained laboriously a scanty living by conveying goods across the desert. His camel and the rags on his back were all that he possessed in the world. Of friends he was as destitute as he was of fortune, and, besides the few casual acquaintances he made in the short intervals between his journeys, knew no human being. It followed that the animal which was his sole support was to him in the place of a friend. They had spent together most of the hours of their lives in traversing alone the white glowing sand of the desert, and had contracted for each other an affection not usually subsisting between man and beast.

Spending his life in toil, which, after all, only brought in the barest pittance for himself and his camel, Sooga Sooka was happy. Sometimes the idea that he was not so prosperous as he ought to be darkened his mind, but it only caused him momentary dissatisfaction; and if he had been

asked to say what he thought would make him happier, he would have had great difficulty in mentioning anything except perhaps a never-failing supply of water for himself and his beast during their travels.

One day, after a weary journey across the desert, Sooga Sooka arrived at an old dried-up well within a few miles of Alkaanzormoud, a city of which possibly not even the ruins now remain. He felt tired and hungry. The place seemed convenient for him to rest and consume the few dates remaining in his bag; so he tethered his camel and sat down on the brink of the well.

As he ate his fruit, he threw the stones down into the well, partly because he was too lazy to throw them anywhere else, and partly from a childish desire to ascertain its depth. The effect of this innocent pastime was startling. A fierce deep growl was heard, and then a monstrous head appeared above the well, glaring ill-temperedly at Sooga Sooka, who became immovable from horror.

'What do you mean,' said the Div, for such was the horrible apparition, 'by throwing date-stones into the well and waking me?'

'I knew not, sir,' answered Sooga Sooka with great fear and humility, 'that you were there, or I should have thrown the stones elsewhere.'

'These wretched mortals,' muttered the Div,

'will not let me sleep. Every day some one comes from the city and disturbs my slumber. I have, in consequence, taken away three kings from the throne of Alkaanzormoud. The first I placed on the top of Mount Atlas, the second on Caucasus, and the third on an iceberg near the North Pole. No one now ventures to be king of Alkaanzormoud, and the people are without a ruler. But it is all in vain. Every day I am disturbed. I must kill this man.'

When Sooga Sooka heard the Div come to this horrible resolution, he trembled exceedingly. A thought, however, came across the mind of the Div which altered his determination.

'What,' he said, 'if, instead of killing him, I make him king of Alkaanzormoud? He would hardly then come and throw date-stones down the well. The people can only have as king the man I allow to remain on the throne. It shall be so.'

Seizing Sooga Sooka by the waist, he flew perpendicularly up a most unnecessary height, till he was nearer to the sun than to the earth, and then, descending, left Sooga Sooka seated on the throne of Alkaanzormoud.

Sooga Sooka found himself surrounded by a large assemblage, for the courtiers, having devoted their lives to one occupation, and not knowing what else to do, were accustomed during the

several interregna caused by the freaks of the Div to practise before the empty throne. They now beheld, with a surprise which they were too courtier-like to show, their new and very ragged sovereign, who was scratching his head with considerable embarrassment. Whether they should acknowledge him or not, was a question which the courtiers would not decide on their own responsibility. They accordingly sent one of their number to call in the grand vizier, who was taking his afternoon nap. That personage was much staggered by the appearance of Sooga Sooka, but after some hesitation he said that it was better to have such a ruler than none at all; and he also added that he had no doubt his majesty would look a great deal better after he was washed. This was a happy idea which had not occurred to anybody else. The bath was prepared, and Sooga Sooka, with some reluctance on his part, was washed for the first time in his life. Being then conducted to the harem, he found that he possessed two hundred wives, and—ignorant mortal that he was—congratulated himself on the acquisition. He supped magnificently, drank copiously of wine, was entertained afterwards with music and dancing, and began to think that it was very pleasant to be a king.

His first act of regal authority was to see that his camel was recovered. He then ordered that

it should have the best stall in the royal stables, and be caparisoned with the richest and gaudiest clothing. He did not exercise much authority besides. In the council chamber he would leave everything to be done by the grand vizier whilst he himself sank into a slumber, from which he was occasionally awakened in a delicate and reverential manner, whenever he snored so loud as to interrupt the state business. In his harem he was absolutely ruled by his numerous and high-born wives, who treated him with the greatest possible contempt, notwithstanding his position and power.

No very long time elapsed before he began to find that a king is not necessarily the happiest of mortals.

One morning the chief of the household approached him with an appearance of great secrecy, and whispered softly in his ear:

'Your life is not safe.'

The fall of a tower could not have astounded Sooga Sooka more than did these gently-uttered words.

'What!' he ejaculated.

'Hush!' the other continued to whisper. 'If it is discovered that you know of this, the moment of your ruin will be hastened. The grand vizier is your enemy. He covets the throne.'

The chief of the household closed these words by a soft and long-protracted hiss of caution, and, with his finger to his lips, slowly retired, leaving Sooga Sooka in a state of horror and amazement. His consternation by no means subsided when, after a short time, he saw the grand vizier enter and walk slowly up to him. Sooga Sooka, fancying that the purpose of the approacher was to plunge a dagger into his heart, slowly retired. The other, perceiving that he was as far as ever from the king, increased his pace; whereupon Sooga Sooka began to skip back with great agility.

'Are you mad, O king?' asked the astonished vizier, standing still.

'Not at all,' answered Sooga Sooka, cunningly concealing the real reason for his retreat; 'but you smell so abominably of musk, that I do not wish you to advance any further.'

'Very well!' said the vizier in a mortified tone; 'what I have to say regards your safety. I want the head of the chief of the household.'

'Why?'

'I find he is engaged in a conspiracy against your life.'

'Leave me!' said Sooga Sooka with considerable dignity. 'I will think of the matter.'

The grand vizier left, and Sooga Sooka remained in a pitiable state of doubt and trepidation.

Agitated by his feelings, he retired to the harem; but he might as well have entered a cage filled with two hundred parrots. Clapping his hands to his ears, he hastened away to the stable in which his former companion, the camel, was confined. This animal, loaded with gaudy trappings, looked almost as melancholy as his master.

'Ah!' said Sooga Sooka to him, 'thou and I would be happier were we traversing the deserts as we were wont to do.'

The animal looked as though he would say, if he could,

'Most certainly.'

Sooga Sooka was engaged in patting affectionately his old friend, when one of his household entered the stable hurriedly, his countenance expressing fear and anxiety.

'The people have revolted,' he said. 'A mob is besieging the palace, and the grand vizier desires you to be present, hoping that your appearance may pacify the insurgents.'

Sooga Sooka reluctantly quitted the stable, and was met by the grand vizier, who conducted him into a verandah whence he could see the multitude.

'Speak to them!' said the grand vizier.

'What shall I say to them?'

'Call them your faithful subjects.'

'My faithful subjects,' commenced Sooga Sooka, but had hardly uttered the words when he was interrupted by a volley of brickbats.

The prime minister, with a humility he did not always display, had kept deferentially in the rear of his sovereign. He, therefore, almost entirely escaped the hostile shower; but poor Sooga Sooka, who had been pushed by his minister to the front, was in a deplorable plight.

The grand vizier turned pale.

'Speak a few more words to them!' he said hurriedly. 'I will see what can be done inside.'

He turned to retreat. A second volley of brickbats which was at that moment sent after them, made him execute this movement very expeditiously, and he sprang back into the palace with an alacrity quite inconsistent with the gravity of his appearance.

Sooga Sooka, deserted by his supporter, felt no inclination to encounter longer the missiles of the mob. He therefore quickly retired. As he did so, he formed a scheme which he at once proceeded to execute with a determination which he had never shown since his accession to the throne. Going to a closet in which was kept the mean attire he had formerly worn, he put off his kingly garments and clothed himself with great satisfaction in these rags. He then descended to the stable, stripped the trappings from his camel, and

putting a halter round its neck, passed with it by a back door out of the precincts of the palace. He met with some of the insurgents, but, as he did not look at all like a king, aroused no suspicions. But the bruises on his face, caused by the application of the brickbats, attracted attention.

'My friend,' said one of the mob to him, 'who has treated you so badly?'

'I was engaged,' said Sooga Sooka, 'in carrying some valuable bales to the grand vizier at the palace. He was present when I was unloading them. I let one of them fall, and he, being a passionate man, immediately laid laid hold of me and pommelled me unmercifully.'

'We will do the same to him when we get into the palace,' observed the insurgent; 'but how did you get those rings?'

Sooga Sooka now saw for the first time that, in his hurry to disguise himself, he had forgotten to take the rings off his fingers. A very obvious and credible explanation, however, occurred to him. He simply said that he had stolen them, and then proceeded unmolested on his way.

He passed on thoughtfully, revolving the changes of his life, till he came to the same old well where he had met the Div. As he reached this place, he meditatively scratched his face. The rings on the hand he raised for this purpose,

sparkling in the sun, drew his notice to them and dissipated his reverie.

'Accursed trinkets!' he exclaimed, 'ye nearly ruined me.' So saying he tore the rings from his hands, and flung them violently to the bottom of the well. Immediately that he did so the Div made his appearance, rubbing his head very hard.

'What!' he roared, 'it is you! I thought you would never come near me again; and now you have come and troubled me worse than ever. These rings are ten times as hard as date-stones. Is this the gratitude you show me for making you a king?'

'Oh, most puissant Jinn!' said Sooga Sooka, 'I was happy and you made me miserable; but I am now no longer a king. Let me go away the humble camel-driver that I was when you first saw me, and I will never trouble you again.'

'Go, in the name of Eblis,' said the Div, 'and leave me to sleep.'

So Sooga Sooka went his way, and the Div resumed his slumbers.

AN ARCADIAN TALE, CONTAINING AN ECLOGUE.

It has long ceased to be the fashion to record the sayings and doings of those pastoral people who, in some golden time, occupied themselves entirely in singing, dancing, piping, making love, and tending sheep; and who never seemed to feel any other evil in the world than the loss of a lamb, or the unkindness of a lover. Still, the history of this happy and amiable race was once thought interesting, and may perhaps again be considered so, since fashion, like a weathercock, though constantly changing, often reverts to the point whence it started. The few following pages rescue from oblivion an account of some members of this people, which is believed to be quite new.

Somewhere in Arcadia, upon a verdant plain, enamelled with flowers, sat the young shepherd Alexis, and the young shepherdess Daphne. Their sheep grazed around unheeded, for the pair were too much engaged in another occupa-

tion, to think of their charge. This occupation was one beautifully illustrative of their simplicity and innocence. They were eating lollipops. Daphne had just inserted one of these sweetmeats into her mouth. But how great is the unselfishness of love? No sooner was it inserted than she remembered her lover, and gracefully holding her mouth towards his, with the lollipop half protruding from it, she requested him by gestures to bite off the exposed moiety. He did so, and then, as was natural, kissed her fair but candied lips. His mouth when it had once met hers, did not part from it for some time. Was it the ardour of young affection, or was it the glutinous nature of the sweatmeat adhering to their lips, which kept them joined together so long?

'Do you really love me?' said Daphne.

'Do I?' echoed Alexis, 'I love you so much, that I would lay down my life to serve you.'

'And I,' said Daphne, 'love you so much, that I think I could kill you rather than see you love any other besides me.'

This was a strong expression of attachment, but also somewhat alarming, and Alexis, on hearing it, did not look as if he thoroughly appreciated it.

'And, I think,' continued Daphne, pouting, 'now that you know what my feelings towards

you are, that you might give up flirting with that ugly, vulgar Chloe.'

'Oho!' said Alexis, 'I might with equal reason complain of your attention towards that lank, lathy, long-legged Damœtas, or short, round Menalcas, who is in form so like a football, that one always feels inclined to kick him.'

It seemed very much as if the billing and cooing of the lovers were about to end in a quarrel, when Chloe, the shepherdess so obnoxious to Daphne, by her arrival opportunely interrupted their conversation.

'Such fun! Daphne,' she said, noisily, as she threw herself down on the ground beside her. 'Your lovers Damœtas and Menalcas, are about to make a grand attack upon your heart. They are going to sing in alternate verses before you, and constitute you the judge of their performances.'

'Why do the fools come here to squall?' growled Alexis; for the poor little fellow, not being able to sing himself, had naturally a great dislike and contempt for such an accomplishment.

'Here they come up the hill,' cried Chloe. 'Look how the long man straddles, and the little man puffs!'

As she spoke the two rivals made their appearance, accompanied by a crowd of shepherds

and shepherdesses, who were anxious to hear and criticise the performances. We are sorry to be obliged to say that Damœtas and Menalcas were induced to pay court to Daphne, by motives far more proper to the present depraved age, than to that in which they lived. The fact was that Daphne possessed large flocks of sheep, and it was this circumstance, rather than her charms, which attracted the attention of the swains. They were habited, as romantic shepherds should be, in silk stockings, and satin vests and inexpressibles. They had not, however, committed the impropriety of arraying themselves, each in the same manner. They expressed their antagonism by the difference of their dress. Whereas, the breeches of Menalcas were yellow, and his coat green, the breeches of Damœtas were green and his coat yellow. Damœtas also wore his hat on the right side of his head, whilst Menalcas had fiercely cocked his on the left. The two gazed with frowning defiance at each other, and then, turning simultaneously to Daphne, made their looks express the greatest amiability. They then stepped forward, and prepared to begin. Daphne yawned, Chloe giggled, Alexis frowned sulkily, the shepherds and shepherdesses looked attentive and critical, whilst the sheep, coming round and enclosing the whole group, gazed upon the proceedings with mute and simple wonder. After

some prefatory hemming and hawing the song was commenced:

DAMŒTAS.

Ten of my lambs 'gainst ten of yours I stake,
That my lines more than yours with Daphne take.

MENALCAS.

Done! done! Damœtas—or I'll do it in
Ponies, if you prefer it. Come! Begin!

DAMŒTAS.

Sportive young Galatea from me rushes,
And flies to play peep-bo amongst the bushes:
She tells me I may follow if I choose,
But I remember Daphne and refuse.

MENALCAS.

As in a ring with nymphs and swains I stand,
Delia goes round, a kerchief in her hand;
She drops it at my feet and runs—in vain!
For I remember Daphne and remain.

DAMŒTAS.

Round me the Muses at my birth did crowd,
And on me each her choicest gifts bestowed.
I as a piper hold the foremost place,
And tell a story with peculiar grace.
And who in dance can kick a leg so strong,
Or has such wind as I to sing a song?

MENALCAS.

Me Phœbus loves: he gave me signs of that
As I lay on the ground an infant fat.
He kissed me ardently upon the nose;
So fierce he kissed that straight a blister rose.
My nose, affected by that scorching kiss,
Has remained red from that time unto this.

DAMŒTAS.

A gift I have discovered for my fair;
I know the nest where doves their young ones rear.
But let me never to that theft proceed;
She might aver it was a cruel deed:
For 'He can ne'er be true,' I've heard her say,
'Who from a bird would take its young away;'
And when I heard her thus her thoughts express,
The more I loved her for her tenderness.

'I think I've heard something like that before,' murmured Daphne.

MENALCAS.

An apple tree I passed this very morn;
Ten golden apples did that tree adorn.
Five as a present for my fair I took;
To gain the rest in vain the tree I shook:
I could not move them. Longingly I stood,
And sighed—but sighing did, alas! no good.
Yet if the Fates a ladder kindly give,
To-morrow I will bring the other five.

DAPHNE.

Nor for you, nor your songs am I inclined;
(*To Menalcas*) You are too fat, and (*To Damœtas*) you too lean and tall;
And I like better than you both combined
Little Alexis, who can't sing at all.

Damœtas no sooner heard Daphne's decision than, like a true musician, he immediately had recourse to his pipe for consolation. The strains, however, which he drew from it did not tend at all to corroborate his assertion that he had been peculiarly favoured by the Muses. On the contrary, so ear-piercing and utterly inharmonious were they, that the shepherds swearing, and the shepherdesses shrieking, fled with haste from the spot. The sheep, with open eyes and mouth, stared wonderingly at the piper; then uttering simultaneously a terrified bleat, they kicked up their heels and fled as precipitately as their pastors had done. Menalcas alone remained. With his teeth clenched, the palms of his hands pressed closely to his ears, the toes of his right foot, clasping agonizingly the calf of his left leg, he stood for some time patient of the excruciating sounds. At last, he could endure them no longer. He seized Damœtas by the collar, and brought him rudely to the ground in a sitting posture. Damœtas involuntarily relinquished his pipe and brought his hands quickly

down to that part of his body on which he had fallen, and which had received a violent shock. Menalcas thereupon seized the pipe and flung it far out of reach.

The two disconsolate swains remained for some time in mournful silence, brooding over their disappointed hopes and wounded vanity. At last Damœtas spoke.

'What is to be done?' he asked, abruptly.

'Well, I don't know,' answered the other, deliberately, 'unless we were to hang ourselves.'

'No,' said Damœtas, shaking his head, 'that would be too unromantic a fate for despairing shepherds.'

'Perhaps,' continued Menalcas, 'you would think drowning a more appropriate fate.'

'The very thing,' exclaimed his companion, impetuously; 'there is a lake hard by.'

Being of an impulsive nature, he immediately started up, and proceeded swiftly in the direction of the lake. Menalcas who had less wind, and perhaps less inclination to sacrifice himself, followed more slowly. When he reached the lake he found his friend immersed in it, but evidently attempting to get out again.

'Help me out,' bubbled Damœtas, 'the water is so cold that I cannot endure it.'

'Well! but it will soon be over, if you will have a little patience,' said Menalcas, consolingly.

'I've changed my mind,' gasped the unfortunate shepherd. 'I don't want to drown myself for the little jilt:' and as he spoke the words he disappeared under the water.

On hearing this, Menalcas seized a boat-hook which was lying near, and waited calmly for the reappearance of his comrade. When Damœtas rose to the surface, the hook was cleverly inserted into his pantaloons, which, as he was a lean man, and the tailors of Arcadia were not skilful, bagged considerably. The dripping swain was then drawn to the shore much to his satisfaction, but greatly to the detriment of the garment by which he had been secured.

After this laudable, though unsuccessful, attempt at acting properly the part of a despised and rejected lover, Damœtas gave up all designs upon his life. Indeed, it seemed as though his ducking had completely washed away his passion for Daphne. Menalcas also forewent all similar designs, if he had ever entertained them.

At the marriage of Alexis and Daphne, which took place soon afterwards, there were no more cheerful guests than these two. Damœtas went down the middle and up again in the rural dances then prevalent in Arcadia, with an agility and elasticity of step which elicited the greatest applause; whilst Menalcas applied himself with such assiduity to the wine cup as to make his

nose richer in colour than before, and caused the slanderous, who existed even at that happy time, to remark that his story as to the origin of its rubicundity was a poetical fiction; and that its scarlet hue was the mark of Bacchus — not of Phœbus.

THE SEEDY KNIGHT.

THE tournament was about to commence. The lists were prepared and the spectators had taken their places. In the galleries, which, to use a modern term, we might call the boxes, sat the ladies bending their heads and necks with the grace of swans and cackling like geese. In a compartment of the gallery devoted entirely to himself (or again to use a modern term—a private box) sat the king—it does not matter what king—his eyes beaming from expectation of the coming contests, and the rest of his face also beaming from his repeated applications to the cold punch with which he whiled away the time preceding the commencement of the performances. The lower order of people were seated round the barriers in a space which—once more to use a modern name—we may style the pit.

After the pursuivants had scattered saw-dust in the lists, the marshals made their appearance, clad

in complete armour and each carrying a long whip, with which to urge on the flagging steeds of the tilters. The heralds then blew their trumpets, and the knights who were to take part in the jousting entered the lists. They were brilliantly and gaudily armed and mounted on well-fed, richly-caparisoned steeds—all save one, who, clad in rusty armour, and mounted on a starved though powerful animal in ragged trappings, contrasted strongly with the gay appearance of the others. Him the lower order of spectators, with the ready wit of a mob, immediately dubbed 'the seedy knight.' As soon as the heralds saw the knights, they advanced obsequiously to them, and cap in hand, cried, 'Largesse, noble knights, largesse!' Then those knights put their hands into their pockets, and gave gold and silver to the heralds. Some gave ten shillings, some five, some half-a-crown. But the seedy knight only gave a well-worn sixpence. The heralds, well satisfied with the other donations, received this gift with contempt, and thought the donor of it stingy. They were mistaken. He was the most generous of all. For, whereas, the other knights gave only a portion of what they possessed, the seedy knight gave all he had.

Then the marshals approached the knights and enquired of them their names and qualities.

These all gave except the seedy knight who, when addressed, replied:

> 'A name I had—the name was good and fair—
> But what it was I may not now declare.'

For this knight, though so mean in appearance, was of such a noble nature that he would never condescend to speak prose. With his mysterious response the marshals were obliged to be satisfied, and the tournament began.

The well-dressed knights met with various success as they contended with each other, but they all met with the same fate when they encountered their disreputable-looking companion. Before his well-directed lance they all went down, and the spectators, forgetting in his prowess his mean looks, roared enthusiastically at every fresh success: 'Well done, good lance!' 'Bravo, seedy knight!' At last there were no more knights left to contend with him, and he stood triumphant in the centre of the lists. Then the king, who had witnessed with interest the achievements of the hero, descended from his high place, and amidst the plaudits of the multitude presented with his own hand to the victor a reeking hot glass of brandy-and-water.

But the success of the seedy knight did not give universal satisfaction. The Lady Adeliza Fitz-faldyral, the proudest and most distinguished of the beauties present, turned up her beautiful

Grecian nose till it almost became a snub, as she witnessed his good fortune.

'Is there no one who can vanquish yon peasant-knight, Sir Alured?' she asked of a knight who stood by her unarmed. Now, Sir Alured was a knight dubbed on carpet consideration, and had not the slightest desire to enter the lists as a combatant. He fidgeted uneasily and replied:

'Seemingly not.'

'Why do you not try?' enquired the lady.

'I have a bad cold,' was Sir Alured's ready and ingenious reply.

'If you do not at once go and fight that man,' said Lady Adeliza, hotly, 'you need never take the trouble of speaking to me again.'

On hearing this intimation Sir Alured turned away unwillingly, and having expressed his intention to do battle with the seedy knight, went and armed himself.

As soon as he was ready, he took his place at one extremity of the lists. The seedy knight gracefully backed his steed to the other.

'Go ahead,' shouted the starter, and the two knights, spurring their horses, met with a mighty crash in the centre of the lists. When the dust which they raised had subsided, the seedy knight was seen erect and uninjured. But where was Sir Alured? Unhorsed, he sat upon the ground,

attempting with his kerchief to staunch the blood that issued from his nose.

The seedy knight having vanquished everybody that had appeared against him, the king called him and declared him victor.

'You have one more duty to perform,' he added, 'before you receive the meed to which your valour entitles you. Take this wreath of artificial flowers and place it at the feet of her whom you elect the queen of beauty.'

The knight bent to the saddle; then sticking the wreath on the top of his lance, he put his glass in his eye, and cantered slowly three times round the lists, examining critically all the ladies present. At last he laid the wreath at the feet of the Lady Adeliza Fitz-faldyral.

'By'r lady, a wise choice,' exclaimed the monarch. 'And now for the recompense.'

So saying, he took from the hands of a page a peach-coloured jerkin, made by his own tailor, and advanced to the spot where Lady Adeliza and the seedy knight were.

'Let us try it on and see how it fits!' said his majesty. 'Lady Adeliza, your fair hands shall undo his armour.'

The honour done to her by the seedy knight had not conciliated the Lady Adeliza. With unwilling hands she unlaced his hauberk and removed it. The shirt of the seedy knight was thus displayed.

'Well,' said the Lady Adeliza, loudly, with an expression of disgust on her features, 'although you are so poor, you might have afforded to put on a clean shirt for the tournament.'

Alas! there was only too much ground for her remark.

The seedy knight, on hearing it, turned pale and said:

'I, who, unvanquished, bore the shock of spears,
Am conquered by a lady's gibes and jeers.'

Having so expressed himself, he took the jerkin and retired some distance from the lists. There he divested himself of his shirt, put on first the jerkin, and then the shirt over the jerkin. Having thus arrayed himself, he reappeared amidst the laughter of the multitude, which he bore with great gravity. He advanced to the Lady Adeliza and spoke again as follows:

'Lady, till I have melted your disdain,
This shirt upon my back must thus remain.'

With these words he gloomily retired.

As he was leaving, Sir Alured, who, having witnessed his discomfiture, no longer bore him enmity, met him and said:

'Let us drink a glass of beer after our combat!

The seedy knight answered:

'Willingly would I but—Oh, Fortune's curse—
I have not got a penny in my purse.'

'Never mind!' exclaimed Sir Alured, 'I will pay for both.'

The seedy knight made reply:

'I must perforce agree for want of pence;
My poverty, but not my will consents.'

Thus anticipating in the last line, by several centuries, the very words of a most renowned poet. They accordingly entered a small public-house adjoining the lists.

When they came out they found that the spectators were leaving, and heard a stentorian voice exclaim:

'Lady Adeliza Fitz-faldyral's litter stops the way.'

Sir Alured immediately pushed forward and offered to escort that lady as far as the castle of her father, who, being laid up with the gout, was not able to come to the tournament. The Lady Adeliza graciously accepted his offer, and Sir Alured, getting on his horse, departed with her and her retinue. The seedy knight also mounted, and, mindful of his vow, followed them, though at some considerable distance.

Sir Alured and Lady Adeliza, as they journeyed, were so pleasantly and deeply engaged in ridiculing and abusing those of their friends whom they had met at the tournament, that they never noticed that they had outstripped their train. They looked round for it after they had entered a wood notorious for robbers, but it was not to be seen. They had not gone much farther before a band of men, dressed in Kendal green with vizors over their faces, rushed out upon them from behind the trees. Sir Alured turned pale, and hastily whispering to the lady that he would go and fetch up her followers, galloped off as hard as he could.

One of the outlaws, who appeared to be the chief, came up to lady Adeliza and demanded her purse.

'I have left it at home,' she said.

'Humbug, madam,' was the outlaw's rude response.

'I assure you I have not got it.'

'Then I must search you,' he said, firmly.

On hearing the expression of so atrocious an intention Lady Adeliza screamed with horror. She turned her eyes wildly round her for assistance. As she did so, she saw some dusky white object appearing through the trees. She looked again, and distinguished the object. It was a dirty shirt.

'I am saved,' she ejaculated.

'Are you?' said the outlaw, dubiously.

The next moment the seedy knight was on the spot, slashing vigorously at the robbers. A fierce contest ensued, but the knight was too much for them. In a few minutes his antagonists had all disappeared. Not, however, without having inflicted on his body several wounds. He advanced to Lady Adeliza and said softly:

'Behold! my shirt is marked by streaks of gore;
'Tis even dirtier than it was before.'

Looking up into his face with an expression of affection and remorse, she simply replied: 'Sir Knight, you have no reason to wear that shirt any longer.'

On hearing these words he dismounted, tore off the unseemly garment and kissed her hand with rapture. As he was thus engaged, up came the retainers with Sir Alured behind them. We cannot positively say why that knight placed himself in the rear; perhaps he did so to prevent any of the retainers from turning back, perhaps because he thought it the safest position. If the last was the reason, he was mistaken. He would have been safer in front. The captain of the dispersed outlaws was still lurking about the place, hidden by the trees. When he heard Lady Adeliza's followers approaching, he deter-

mined to have one blow at the last man from his place of concealment. As, with his lance in rest, Sir Alured rode by, rising in his stirrups and leaning forward like a modern jockey, the outlaw made a cut at him with his hanger and struck him behind. The wound was slight, but disagreeable, from having been inflicted in so dishonourable a part of the body. So cleverly was it given, that the knight had not the slightest idea how he got it.

The Lady Adeliza received Sir Alured very stiffly.

'As you have got a cold, sir,' she said, 'I would advise you to go home and put your feet in hot water; though, methinks,' she added, with a sneer, 'you are in general much too careful about not getting into hot water.'

It was not easy to put Sir Alured out of countenance. He bowed with mock solemnity to the lady, and nodding good-humouredly to the seedy knight, turned to depart. An expression of pain certainly did then pass over his face, but as he at the time happened to be moving very abruptly in the saddle, it was, perhaps, not caused by the lady's displeasure.

The seedy knight escorted the Lady Adeliza to her home, and was naturally asked by her father to stay a short time at the castle. Lady Adeliza's feelings towards him had completely

changed since the incident in the forest, and before long they were engaged to be married. We presume that, when the marriage took place, the seedy knight declared what his name was. But whatever it was, it has not been transmitted to us by history. The Lady Adeliza whatever-her-other-name-became used to henpeck her husband considerably. Nevertheless, it is said, they lived together not unhappily.

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